



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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July 26, 1996

96-130

- TENNESSEE--SBC agencies intensifying effort to confront hunger.
- KUWAIT--Kuwaiti man loses rights over his belief in Christ.
- TENNESSEE--Stewardship leaders to join Executive Committee staff.
- ATLANTA--Olympic Village ministry: cooperation, flexibility.
- ALBANIA--Growth of gospel accelerates in formerly atheistic Albania.
- ALBANIA--Albanian leaders emerge as CSI work progresses; photo.
- ATLANTA--Hotel ministry assignment becomes multihousing work; photos.
- CALIFORNIA--Rick Warren earns 'Gold' for 'Purpose Driven Church.'
- WISCONSIN--Cyber Corner: Multimedia visit to Jerusalem available via CD-ROM program.

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SBC agencies intensifying effort to confront hunger

By Dwayne Hastings

Baptist Press
7/26/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--In an acknowledgment of the unceasing tragedy of world hunger, three entities of the Southern Baptist Convention have forged a cooperative new working relationship to equip Southern Baptists to more effectively respond to the needs of the hungry.

Alarmed by the ongoing decline in giving to world hunger needs by Southern Baptists, the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board and Christian Life Commission have reaffirmed their responsibility to confront the problem of hunger in the United States and around the world.

Southern Baptist world hunger offering receipts peaked in 1985 and have been falling since. Don Kammerdiener, executive vice president at the Foreign Mission Board, noted the general public's interest in hunger seems to rise and fall depending on television news reports featuring stories of famine and starvation in faraway lands.

"Something seems to have changed in our culture," Kammerdiener said. "We are far more concerned about things close at hand. We seem to have more local concerns now."

Kammerdiener suggested SBC agencies "have not been as effective as (they) could have been," saying it is at least partially a "public relations problem."

He applauded the decision of the agencies to pool resources in an emphasis on hunger. "If we all promote the same things, it's bound to have a greater impact."

"We are excited about this historic new working relationship in the area of hunger awareness among Southern Baptists," said Richard Land, president of the Christian Life Commission. "The personnel of all three agencies are enthusiastic about the potential inherent in this new working partnership."

The entities agreed to jointly underwrite the cost of a new staff person at the Christian Life Commission; the individual's sole assignment will be hunger awareness.

"This arrangement reflects a unique and selfless commitment by the Home and Foreign Mission boards, allowing us to most effectively zero in on the need for a unified response from Southern Baptists against the plight of the victims of malnutrition and starvation," Land said.

The entities also are cooperating in the publication of a hunger guide. The booklet is designed to help local church leaders build hunger awareness within their congregations.

The theme for the guide is "A Dollar In -- A Dollar Out," Land explained. "When Southern Baptists send money designated for hunger relief to the Christian Life Commission, they can be assured all 100 cents of their dollar goes directly to hunger relief." According to longstanding agreements, 80 percent of such gifts goes to relief efforts overseas, with the remainder sent to the Home Mission Board for hunger relief in the United States.

Such a funding system is not common to all organizations asking for money in the name of hungry people. "Southern Baptists need to be aware that many so-called ministries don't use 100 percent of their receipts for hunger relief efforts," said C. Ben Mitchell, Christian Life Commission consultant on life issues.

"Southern Baptists have a tradition of excelling in helping ministries such as hunger relief. This partnership celebrates that tradition and puts it to work even more effectively," Mitchell said.

"We have to do more and do more in a coordinated way," Land said, citing the new partnership as evidence Southern Baptists are committed to ministering to those they know are in need. "We cannot afford to look the other way while millions around the world and in our own nation are slowly starving to death," Land said.

"It's not a shortage of requests for money, but a shortage of supply that makes this a crisis," Kammerdiener said, noting hunger relief efforts in the field are tied directly to the level of designated giving by Southern Baptists.

"If we don't give, missionaries don't have the funds necessary to feed the people," Kammerdiener said.

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Kuwaiti man loses rights over his belief in Christ

By Marty Croll

**Baptist Press
7/26/96**

KUWAIT CITY, Kuwait (BP)--On the soil where American soldiers fought to secure freedom, Robert Hussein passes each day unprotected from tyranny.

Once a wealthy contractor, Hussein, 44, has been stripped by Kuwait's courts of his civil rights and his material wealth -- assets totaling \$4 million -- and driven into hiding. Now his enemies would have his life as well.

His crime? Refusal to renounce his faith in Jesus Christ and embrace Mohammed, the founder of Islam.

Claiming the Kuwait government is actually behind the attacks against him, Hussein has gone into exile. His wife and two children, ages 4 and 7, and his brothers and sisters risk death if they communicate with him.

Like many nations, Kuwait declares by its constitution it allows freedom of religion, while its Muslim-dominated court system contends the constitution gets its power only from Islamic law -- which does not allow conversion from Islam.

But Western nations consider Kuwait a free nation because of its constitution and its elected Parliament. "We are telling everyone in the West our freedom of the expression of religion is absolute," said Hussein, reached by cellular phone at an undisclosed location in Kuwait. "Have I breached the Kuwaiti constitution?"

"My wife has been raped. My home has been abolished. But there has been no official statement from the Kuwait government saying this man is protected by Kuwaiti laws, and he has been harmed."

Until December, Muslim extremists who knew of Hussein's Christian faith harassed him -- but police provided some protection, he said. But since December, when he publicly announced to the court he was a Christian, "the police started to put their hands away."

His home has been ransacked. What couldn't be stolen was destroyed. His wife and children have moved in with her family. Police and other government officials have done nothing, he said.

In June, Judge Jafar Al-Quzweeni ruled Islamic law calls for Muslim leaders to execute Hussein for apostasy. But there is no mention of apostasy in the nation's constitution.

Three Muslim lawyers originally brought their case to the family court in February, saying Hussein should be stripped of his civil rights as a Kuwaiti citizen.

Although Muslim lawyers said their case against Hussein stayed within legal limits of disinheritance and family matters under Muslim law, it nonetheless gave them the opportunity to inflame mass sentiment against him -- and offered the judge a chance to invite execution.

In his ruling, the judge stated: "People like the defendant must be killed. In addition, his wife should be divorced from him and all his possessions should be distributed to his heirs." He quoted Muslim law: "The Imam should kill him without a chance to repent. ... His blood should be shed by Muslims. ... It is obligatory for Muslims to kill an apostate like the defendant."

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Hussein first learned he was on trial through a newspaper article. At a hearing in December he asked the court to judge his case by article 35 of the constitution, which guarantees freedom of religion. The judge said, however, his was a case for Muslim law.

"I would say to you (in America): You paid your sons and daughters to free Kuwait. You have the right to ask your government: 'Are these people free or not?'"

"This case is not about Robert Hussein. It is about the Christians here. Do they have a right to decide their own faith? Why, every time we pray, every time we have Bible study, do they penetrate our houses? Why are we distressed, beheaded?"

Most baffling to Hussein is that government-run newspapers are inciting sentiment against him. "Instead of putting an end to this nonsense, (government leaders) are encouraging it and inflaming public opinion," he said.

"They are telling the world, and their subjects, look what kind of man this (Hussein) is. Look who is his God. They know we are right and they are wrong."

With the help of the U.S.-based Rutherford Institute, Hussein filed an appeal set to be heard Sept. 15. Except for a full reversal of the judge's first ruling, "the only alternative is the darkness of tyranny," said Pedro Moreno, international coordinator for the institute.

Hussein's case has drawn international attention. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, evangelical Christianity's largest missionary-sending agency worldwide, is one of a myriad of Christian and human rights groups that has publicly and privately appealed to Kuwait to defend its constitution and protect Hussein. Board President Jerry Rankin declared his concerns for Hussein at a June 27 news conference.

In a letter to Kuwaiti Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al-Sabah, a coalition of 48 U.S. Congress members condemned actions against Hussein: "Many Americans who enthusiastically supported the liberation of Kuwait are puzzled and outraged at this infringement to a Kuwaiti citizen's constitutional rights," they wrote.

Several British Parliament members wrote an open letter to the Daily Telegraph in Great Britain. They urged Kuwait "to intervene" and protect Hussein and stop any further attempts to strip him of his civil rights.

Kuwait's dilemma: whether or not to turn aside Muslim law in favor of its own constitution, which guarantees the personal freedom Western allies consider an inalienable, universal human right, and risk the wrath of Muslim extremists.

Taking Hussein's side could pave the way for Kuwait and other Arab nations to allow Christians to worship freely and to offer protection from radical Muslims. But it could also set the trigger for extremist Muslim elements battling in Parliament for the adoption of pure Muslim law. Elections for Parliament are in October.

Hussein acknowledged he could be killed any time. "I am human, so I do have some fear," he said. "My life and everything I have, I have put in God's hand. But if anything does happen, I pinpoint directly the government of Kuwait. They are responsible for the safety of all of their citizens, and I am a part of that."

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**Stewardship leaders to join
Executive Committee staff**

**Baptist Press
7/26/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--James L. Powell and James L. Austin, executive vice president and vice president for Cooperative Program promotion, respectively, of the Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission, have accepted positions with the SBC Executive Committee, effective no later than June 19, 1997, when the Stewardship Commission will be dissolved.

The commission's dissolution will result from the SBC restructuring, "Covenant for a New Century," adopted by messengers to the June 11-13 annual meeting in New Orleans.

Morris H. Chapman, Executive Committee president and chief executive officer, announced the planned staff additions during a meeting of the Stewardship Development Association in Carmel, Calif., July 24. The SDA, made up of national and state leaders in stewardship and CP promotion, greeted the announcement with applause.

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"Powell and Austin have a vast amount of knowledge about relationships and the production and distribution of informational resources needed for continued growth of the Cooperative Program," Chapman reported. "They will bring creativity and openness to change, in addition to their total of 40 years of experience in CP promotion."

Powell, employed by the Stewardship Commission 24 years, will serve as director of CP relations in the division of CP Advancement led by the Executive Committee's executive vice president, Ernest E. Mosley.

"I'm excited about joining the EC staff in its commitment to advancing the impact of the CP on Southern Baptists' growing ministry in the United States and throughout the world," Powell stated. "The call of Christ to reach our lost world, matched with developing technologies in communicating our messages, gives us great challenge and great opportunity in CP advancement."

Austin, a 16-year Stewardship Commission employee, who will serve as director of CP promotions, echoed Powell's optimism. "Southern Baptists have always responded well when provided biblical and practical information in useful formats," Austin said. "In conversations with Morris Chapman and Ernest Mosley, I've become more enthused about the future of the CP and the resources we can develop to assist in its advancement."

Powell and Austin will work to help the Executive Committee enhance awareness of the CP as the basic channel of support for ministries of state conventions and the SBC and to assist churches, associations, state conventions and SBC entities in conducting, enlarging and improving plans for increased support of Great Commission ministries through the CP.

Powell will assist in planning and implementing effective strategies, giving attention to enhancing relationships and understandings essential to CP advancement. He will conduct CP research projects and interpret the findings for Southern Baptists. He also will assist state and associational leaders in planning and conducting events through which the CP is interpreted.

Austin will focus on planning, developing and distributing electronic and print media resources. He will continue to provide information to other SBC agencies for presentation in materials they provide Southern Baptists.

Charles L. Sullivan, chairman of the Stewardship Commission and executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, affirmed Chapman's announcement as constructive and timely. "I think it is an excellent decision, one with which I am delighted. They are two of the finest and strongest men in their field and will continue to help the Executive Committee magnify the Cooperative Program," Sullivan stated.

Chapman informed the state convention stewardship and CP leaders he was happy to announce the staffing decision now to assure there is no loss of effective service to the churches, associations, state conventions and SBC agencies. "We also want to help reduce anxiety and frustration normally associated with major organizational changes," he said.

Chapman also informed SDA members of plans to begin studies of the needs of churches for CP information and the most effective ways for the Executive Committee and state conventions to work together in meeting those needs.

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**Olympic Village ministry:
cooperation, flexibility**

By John D. Pierce

**Baptist Press
7/26/96**

ATLANTA (BP)--For the Baptist Center at Georgia Tech to be bustling with activity is not an usual sight. But during a few weeks this summer, the center is not filled with students seeking engineering degrees, but some of the world's most gifted athletes competing for gold.

The Georgia Tech campus has been transformed into Olympic Village for the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta -- and the Baptist Center, strategically located on east campus, serves as the primary religious activities building.

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A well-trained ecumenical team of chaplains, including several Baptists, has planned and is leading a variety of interfaith activities and services. In addition to scheduled worship services and pastoral counseling, chaplains are finding many opportunities for ministry among the elite athletes who must bear the burdens of high expectations and intense national pride. It is often the pre-competition stress that leads to moments of ministry.

"When people are fatigued, there are just plenty of opportunities for ministry," said Elmer Goble, director of volunteers for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, who has been coordinating religious activities for the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) for nearly two years.

Goble credited the good work of many within Atlanta's religious community who have worked together over the past few years to prepare for the Summer Games. Those efforts, he said, have built relationships of trust which are evident in the work of Olympics chaplains.

"Being together for that long has paid off," he noted.

Other Baptist leaders are among the interfaith corp of chaplains, including Bobby Evans, David Roland and Harriet Clardy of the Tech Baptist Center staff. Gary Leazer, an interfaith witness expert and member of Smokerise Baptist Church, Stone Mountain, also has led in planning and conducting religious activities in the village.

However, the actual ministry experiences each day inside the lively village defy the planning of scheduled events. Chaplains must adapt to take advantage of the varied and unpredictable opportunities.

When Poland's chef de mission (team leader) died of cardiac arrest suffered during opening ceremonies, the chaplain staff was available for ministry. By the next evening, the Polish delegation and chaplains gathered for a memorial service in the village. A local Polish-speaking priest was enlisted to lead the service.

Chaplains have been requested by the village medical staff to make regular visits to the Polyclinic. There they provide comfort and encouragement to those injured at such a crucial time or who are suffering from pre-competition stress.

When Kurvin Wallace hurt his leg in practice, it ended his dream of being the first Olympian to ever come from the island of Nevis --which competes as part of the National Olympic Team with St. Kitts. He was embraced by chaplains who prayed with him and helped him deal with such great disappointment.

Often athletes stop by the center seeking someone with whom they can talk and pray. Several have asked for Scriptures to read. "We have lots of athletes who come by and request language Bibles," said Leazer, who hastened to replenish the stock.

In addition to regularly scheduled services and pastoral counseling, chaplains host several language groups including approximately 40 Korean Christian athletes who gather at the center every morning at 5 a.m. for an hour of prayer and worship.

"One thing I've noticed is they pray a lot more in their services than we (Southern Baptists) do," Leazer said. He noted the group also has worship activities on three evenings each week in spite of their intense athletic training.

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Growth of gospel accelerates in formerly atheistic Albania

**Baptist Press
7/26/96**

TIRANA, Albania (BP)--Churches continue to spring up in Albania, with dozens of new believers being baptized at the same time and hundreds praying to receive Christ during visitation campaigns.

Albania government leaders once bragged theirs was the most atheistic country on earth. Now the Eastern European country has dozens of Christian congregations and a people hungry for the gospel, said Gale R. Hartley, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary assigned there.

And with 11 congregations, Baptists in Albania are beginning to discuss starting a convention or union to improve cooperation, he said.

Hartley and fellow Foreign Mission Board missionary Lawrence Duhon baptized 29 new believers at a new church in Fier recently and now membership is at 50 and growing. "These are mostly younger people from both Muslim and Orthodox backgrounds," said Hartley. Duhon now leads the Fier work.

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Some of the new believers were reached during April when 21 volunteers with the U.S.-based Global Mission Fellowship witnessed door-to-door. More than 500 people prayed to receive Christ as their personal Savior. The Americans used Albanian translators to help them present the gospel.

Hartley is now concentrating his ministry in Tirana, the capital, and Durres, a port city. In Durres he is starting with a group of nine believers who became Christians last year.

The Foreign Mission Board is sending several new missionaries during 1996 to help meet the heavy response, said Larry Cox, associate area director for central Europe. One request for a church planter has not been filled, he added.

While dozens of Christian groups from America and Western Europe maintain workers in Albania, the arrival of two Romanian volunteers in July indicates a new phase of work. The two young women, sponsored by Sega Baptist Church in Arad, Romania, hope to reach Albanians of Romanian descent, Hartley said.

But Albania is not a clear field for Christian evangelists. Muslim groups in the Middle East are heavily financing mosque construction and the teaching of Islam across Albania. In pre-communist times, Albania was said to be more Muslim than Christian, but today both names mean little more than a cultural label to most people.

When Hartley visited one Muslim family, the father was furious. "I'm a Muslim and all my daughters want to talk about now is Jesus since you have come, and I don't like it," the man told him.

"Those were his first words to me when I arrived at the home," Hartley said.

But Hartley sat down with him and told of the Jesus who had so intrigued his 16- and 12-year-old daughters. "By the time I left, the man said his daughters could continue studying the Bible, and he even offered to help us find a place to meet," Hartley said.

American-based cult groups also are competing for souls in Albania. One 65-year-old man who had been attending Baptist Bible studies told Hartley about Jehovah's Witnesses who had visited him and left printed material. He said he had looked over the material, but "I don't have a good feeling about it." When Hartley explained Jehovah's Witnesses present a distorted theology, the man said he would not allow them to enter his house again.

Albania has been isolated for so long many standard Baptist teaching aids still seem new, missionary Leslie Hartley has discovered. When she used a flannel graph board to teach Bible stories to Muslim children in her neighborhood, they came back the next day for more.

"It's just really something what God is doing in Albania," Hartley said.

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Albanian leaders emerge as CSI work progresses

**Baptist Press
7/26/96**

KRUJA, Albania (BP)--In a narrow cave, flames of white and yellow leap toward Shpresa Miraci's face as she ignites the contents of a small packet held up in praise.

Shpresa is a Bektashi holy woman. She came to the mountaintop temple today to help sacrifice a rooster brought by Laureta Ajazi -- not for a petition or sin offering, but simply an act of praise.

Laureta came from Kruja, a small city at the foot of Albania's Skenderbeut Mountains. It's Mecca for the Bektashi, a heretical Islamic sect that draws on Christianity, Islam and ancient pagan rituals to form a mystical mix.

While the Bektashi are not well known in the West, their Turkish cousins are famous for their transcendental dancers commonly known as the Whirling Dervishes.

The Bektashis' theological mix mirrors an Albanian trait of selectively embracing beliefs and customs from its many rulers. Roman, Bulgar, Serb, Venetian, Byzantine and Ottoman Turk rulers all have governed Albania. Each brought his own culture and religion.

At different times in Albania's history, both Christianity and Islam reigned as "the religion" of Albania. Yet today, neither faith can claim prominence.

"Albania is in a time of drift. We came here looking for a way to pass on a gift of hope," said David Carpenter, a worker for Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist aid organization. "We're trying hard not to clutter up this message with our own American culture. We don't always succeed, but we are starting to see the first signs of an Albanian Christian leadership emerging."

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Artan Malo, from Tirana, Albania, has seen God lay the first building blocks for a living church as he works on a CSI follow-up team.

"Most people I see in my country are blind," he said. "They pretend to believe in God. Some say they are Christian, others Muslim, but they all act the same and they all don't know who Jesus is. This makes me so sad, and I want to tell them what I know."

Artan's partner, Mirela Strazimiri, from Tirana, Albania, feels the same way.

"There are times in the village when the people are so cold. They refuse to hear what we have to say about Jesus," Strazimiri said. "Sometimes we can only move on. This is what happened last summer when we went into a village that was so open. We had just left a village that closed us out. But the next village amazed us. The people were all around us saying, 'Tell me about this Jesus. Tell me about God.'

"I remember thinking that I could do this for all my life."

Carpenter has seen other Albanian team members draw the same conclusion. He also is seeing God work in villagers' lives. Some key people are asking what it means to be part of the body of Christ.

"People are now beginning to ask those first questions that lead to a church," he said. "People are starting to seek out answers from the Bible on their own and a few are praying together.

"It took us more than a year of hard work to get to this point in some of the villages," he said. "We have more work ahead of us, but it is not really in my hands, or even the hands of our Albanian partners. If this is of God -- and I believe it is -- then it will last."

The key for Carpenter and other CSI workers is an obedience to God and a servant's heart, he said. These are the tools that bring lasting light, not just another flash in history absorbed into some future religious mix.

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(BP) photo (horizontal) mailed 7/26/96 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutline posted in SBCNet News Room.

Hotel ministry assignment becomes multihousing work

By Julie Nall

Baptist Press
7/26/96

ATLANTA (BP)--The Olympic volunteer assignment from Atlanta International Ministries (AIM '96) said "children's ministry at hotels." What it didn't say was folding sheets and blankets in a stuffy laundry room, translating faxes into Spanish and Japanese behind the front desk, painting children's faces on a busy city street or cleaning up remains of a beer bash.

To minister to internationals in Atlanta for the Olympics, the Missouri Super Summer Gold School trained to do day camps at hotels. Members planned crafts, sorted supplies and practiced witnessing using the "Interactive Pocket Guide '96."

But "God knew what he was doing before we ever got there, and it wasn't what we had planned" said Stacy Callaway, a chaperone for the group from Troy, Mo.

The biggest day camp was not at the hotel but an apartment complex next door. The complex provided the swimming pool area and a spare apartment for the event, which was attended by about 30 children.

Volunteers from First Baptist Church, West Point, Miss., worked before the Missouri group to clean up the remains of a beer party where the day camp was to be held. Apparently, bashes are held there often, "so it's really a place that needs a witness," said Mary Ingram, a volunteer from West Point. "Instead of refusing to help the maids to clean it up, we got right in there and cleaned. I hope fully that our actions will speak to them. It's a service mind-set one needs on a mission trip."

At the day camp, students led Bible stories, stories of Christian Olympic athletes, games, crafts and swimming. Sounds of "Mother May I?" and "Duck, Duck, Goose" mingled with giggles and smiles as the children attached themselves to the volunteers.

"It was exciting for me, because I have never seen children so hungry for love," said Ryan Mahoney, a volunteer from Hermann, Mo. Many of the children come from split families and crave the love of adults, he said. The girls welcomed his swimming lessons; the boys climbed on his back and shoulders and clung to this hand.

The day camps also sparked interest in parents who began to wonder why the volunteers were in Atlanta, Mahoney said. Parents grew to trust workers with their children.

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Volunteers in other areas did not understand at first how their ministries were important or how they related to their original assignments. Several volunteers at a senior adult apartment complex did tasks like walking residents to the grocery store to do their shopping or assembling furniture in a soon-to-be office. Then they noticed that the residents were greatly encouraged by visiting with a younger generation.

Josh Robinson, a Missouri volunteer who works as a clown, was placed at a downtown AIM '96 hospitality center instead of a hotel day camp. "Sometimes I feel like the only time I touch a life is when I lead someone to Christ," he said. His thoughts changed, though, while ministering to a young boy.

"I knew when I handed that boy the balloon and saw the look in his eyes that even though he was too young to understand, he knew there was something different about us." For that, the volunteers agreed, the surprise change in assignment was worth more than gold.

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Nall is a newswriter for Missouri Word & Way newsjournal. (BP) photos (5) and cutlines related to Olympic ministries posted on SBCNet. For photos to be mailed, call Sarah Zimmerman in the HMB news office at (770) 410-6533.

**Rick Warren earns 'Gold'
for 'Purpose Driven Church'**

**Baptist Press
7/26/96**

ANAHEIM, Calif. (BP)--Rick Warren's "The Purpose Driven Church" was one of 22 books receiving "Gold Medallion" awards from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association July 13 in Anaheim, Calif.

Warren, pastor of Saddleback Community Church, Lake Forest, Calif., was the top winner in ECPA's Christian ministry category.

A book published by the Baptist Spanish Publishing House -- "Los Evangelicos Y La Politica" by Jose Luis Martinez, an editor at the Southern Baptist-related ministry in El Paso, Texas -- was the top winner in the Spanish category.

Joe Poe, director of the Southern Baptist-related publishing house, said Martinez' book addresses the feeling of alienation many evangelicals in Spanish-speaking countries feel from an alliance between government and traditional religion. The book, written in a question-and-answer format for laypeople, encourages evangelicals to be responsible citizens by becoming involved in the political process, Poe said. Poe said Martinez has worked at the Baptist Spanish Publishing House since 1980; previously he was a pastor in Spain.

The ECPA contest's 22 categories, focusing on content, literary quality and significance of contribution, involved 200 judges, mostly Christian retailers.

Warren's 400-page book, from Zondervan Publishing House, details the story, philosophy and strategy behind Saddleback's growth from seven people in 1980 to more than 12,000 attenders for its weekend services. Saddleback now is the second-largest attended church in the Southern Baptist Convention and one of the five largest in America, according to a report by Chris Meyer, a writer with the Orange County (Calif.) Register.

"The Gold Medallion award was just icing on the cake," Warren told Meyer. "The real thrill for me has been the hundreds of testimonial letters I've received from church leaders telling how their churches have been revived and renewed by the principles in the book."

Meyer reported "The Purpose Driven Church" has been in print only eight months and already has been the top seller in Baptist bookstores the last six months; is being translated into Russian, Chinese and Korean; and has been adopted as a textbook by 23 seminaries, including the six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries.

On Sunday, July 14, Zondervan President Stan Gundry made a special presentation of the award to the Saddleback congregation. Joking about Warren's typical California casual attire, Gundry said, "I witnessed something at the Gold Medallion banquet that many of you have never seen: Rick Warren wearing a suit, tie, and socks!"

Warren credited his flock and God for the honor. "There would have been no 'Purpose Driven Church' book if you hadn't been a purpose-driven congregation. Saddleback was the laboratory where we tested and proved that these ideas were both biblical and effective. Let's look forward to when we can lay this award at the feet of Jesus because he deserves all the credit and glory."

In an interview in the August 1996 edition of SBC LIFE, published by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, Warren talked about the church's "seeker-sensitive" style, noting:

"'Seeker-sensitive' doesn't mean you compromise the message. It means that you take into consideration people's culture in order to communicate that message. Making a service 'comfortable' for the unchurched doesn't mean changing your theology; it means changing the environment of the service -- such as changing the way you greet visitors, the style of music you use, the Bible translation you preach from and the kind of announcements you make in the service. The message is not always comfortable. In fact, sometimes God's truth is very uncomfortable. Still, we must teach 'the whole counsel of God.' Being seeker-sensitive does not limit what you say, but it will affect how you say it."

Warren continued: "Imagine a missionary saying to a tribe, 'I have the best news in the world, but to hear it, you must first learn my language, start wearing my kind of clothes, sing my songs, and come to my building, at a time convenient for me.' We'd call that a strategy for failure, but we do it in America all the time. We say, 'You have to hear the good news in our language and through our tunes.'"

In other Gold Medallion awards, the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association named "The Jesus I Never Knew" by Philip Yancey, published by Zondervan, as Christian book of the year. The award was voted on by retailers across the country. Yancey has won eight Gold Medallions since 1978 for his work, including a second award this year in the inspirational category, "Finding God in Unexpected Places," published by Moorings.

In a video with various tributes to Yancey, evangelist Billy Graham said, "There is no writer in the evangelical world that I admire and appreciate more."

Among other Gold Medallion winners were:

- Devotional: "Abiding in Christ" by Cynthia Heald, NavPress Publishing Group.
- Christian living: "Life on the Edge" by James Dobson, Word Publishing.
- Biography/autobiography: "Rebel With A Cause" by Franklin Graham, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc.
- Fiction: "The Oath" by Frank Peretti, Word.
- Christianity & society: "Hitler's Cross: The Revealing Story of How the Cross of Christ Was Used as a Symbol of the Nazi Agenda" by Erwin W. Lutzer, Moody Press.
- Missions/evangelism: "Evangelism That Works" by George Barna, Gospel Light/Regal Books.
- Marriage: "Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts" (three-volume set) by Les Parrott III and Leslie Parrott, Zondervan.
- Family and parenting: "God's Design for Sex Series" (series of four) by Stan and Brenna Jones, NavPress.
- Preschool children: "Mouse in King Solomon's House" by Mack Thomas, Questar Publishers, Inc.
- Elementary children: "Paw Paw Chuck's Big Ideas in the Bible," no author listed, Word.
- Youth: "I'm Outta Here!: Facing the Tough Choices After High School" by Len Woods, Baker Books.

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Compiled by Art Toalston. Mark Kelly and Jon Walker contributed to this story. The complete text of Rick Warren's SBC LIFE interview is posted in SBCNet News Room.

CYBER CORNER

**Multimedia visit to Jerusalem
available via CD-ROM program**

By David Burzynski

**Baptist Press
7/26/96**

SOUTH MILWAUKEE, Wis. (BP)--"Pathways Through Jerusalem," a CD-ROM program by Future Vision, calls itself multimedia and, after its installation, takes little time before its wonders start to unfold.

It's not the ultimate example of what true multimedia can be, but is currently one of the best examples in the religious field.

"Pathways Through Jerusalem," a two-volume CD-ROM program, brings alive the city of Jerusalem through the eyes of nine different characters and delves into the Christian, Jewish and Islamic history of the 3,000-year-old city.

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The first tour guide is King David, then we have Herod the Great with Queen Helena rounding out the first trio. The second three are Dirk the Crusader, Suleman the Magnificent and Raphael representing modern Christian Jerusalem. The final trio has Azziz in modern Muslim Jerusalem, Tammar in contemporary Jerusalem and Daniella with an overview of the city's 3,000 years.

The Main Map allows you to look at more than 300 sites in and around the city of Jerusalem. The Database, which includes more than 200 entries, combines information and background concerning the city, religious events, terminology and much more.

Future Vision also has included a Timeline that gives a general overview of Jerusalem and the history of the world. Each area has a corresponding button to help you find what you are looking for. Additional buttons give you added detail. The Source button allows you to read and hear selections from primary sources such as the Bible, Koran, Josephus, The New York Times, etc. The Discovery button relates to archaeologists and discoveries that bring history to life. The Legend button uses narrations and animations that relate ancient legends and folklore to the nine tours featured in the program. The final two buttons, Video and Time Morph, help the user utilize the program's multimedia aspects.

Before we get too far here, it needs to be said there is some jumpiness to the video clips and melding of colors. The box lists minimum as 8 megs of memory, but the jewel case jacket says 4 megs minimum (8 megs recommended). The optimum motherboard memory would be 16 megs with all other programs closed while journeying though the holy city of Jerusalem.

The current price is \$49.95 plus shipping and handling. It is well worth it if you haven't been or can't afford to visit Jerusalem in the next few years. And it can prove valuable to pastors as well as teachers and students of the Bible. If you're interested in this CD-ROM program, call Softkey at 1-800-227-5609.

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Burzynski, pastor of Southeast Baptist Church, South Milwaukee, Wis., also reviews software for Christian Computing magazine.

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