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**Volunteers put mission
first, comfort second**

By Julie Nall

**Baptist Press
7/30/96**

ATLANTA (BP)--The church gym looks more like a messy boot camp, with air mattresses strewn around the perimeter of a hard, fast game of basketball and clothes thrown down in every spare inch of walking space. The Sunday school room is splattered with sleeping bags, hair dryers and suitcases, with a nearby stair rail doubling as a clothes line for drying bath towels.

As masses of spectators swarmed to Atlanta for the Centennial Olympic Games, thousands of volunteers for Atlanta International Ministries (AIM '96) also arrived. With hotels and motels full, these travelers with a mission in mind first and comfort second hit the floors at night.

Briarlake Baptist Church, Decatur, Ga., welcomed about 150 volunteers the week before the opening ceremonies -- twice as many volunteers as expected. A miscommunication that did not count volunteers from nearby South Carolina was the main cause of the extra numbers, explained Tom McDougald, coordinator of volunteer housing at Briarlake.

The second week, 150 volunteers came to Briarlake, including groups from Missouri and South Carolina. The church gym has two showers for men and two for women. McDougald asked church members to take volunteers home for showers, but the groups managed to coordinate schedules so everyone got a shower at the church -- though not necessarily a warm one. After a busy day of working and playing in the blazing heat, though, volunteers welcomed refreshing cool water.

The extra number of volunteers caused a minor panic among church members responsible for breakfast of cereal, muffins, fruit, milk and juice, served from 6 to 9 a.m. But McDougald encouraged members to remain flexible, and breakfast worked out quite well, he said.

While most volunteers envisioned lodging similar to that at Briarlake, some were surprised positively, but others were more than a bit disappointed.

Teresa Dickens, member of a Woman's Missionary Union Enterprisers group from Birmingham, Ala., was not sure what to expect. Word was out that some churches were moving in disaster relief showers for the volunteers. But First Baptist Church, Norcross, took special care of the WMU group. One shower was shared by 14 women, and they had access to a washer and dryer.

Volunteers from First Baptist Church, West Point, Miss., were not impressed with the church where they stayed. At the beginning of the week, 110 volunteers were housed at the facility, but soon about half the group left in search of more adequate facilities, said Tori Lippicott, a youth volunteer from West Point. Her group hung on, purchasing new shower mats, shower curtains and cleaning supplies.

"It hasn't ruined our trip, it just isn't as nice as we thought it would be," said Jane Turnipseed, a volunteer from West Point. Another disadvantage was no access to phones.

But whatever the surroundings, when the lights went out at night, most volunteers were grateful they could afford to stay in a city where rooms were sold out months ago and prices were increased dramatically for "Olympic rates."

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"Staying together like this really builds relationships between campers and other campers and between sponsors and campers," said Kristen Forman, a volunteer from Hannibal-LaGrange College in Hannibal, Mo. Forman slept with about 34 other ladies, from youth to senior adults, in a room at Briarlake. "We are going to know one another, and we are really bonding."

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Nall is a newswriter for Missouri Baptists' Word & Way newsjournal. (BP) photos and cutlines from Olympic ministries are posted on SBCNet.

**'God goes before you,'
Rankin tells journeymen**

**Baptist Press
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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Young people who follow God's call to missions will find he goes before them and rolls back the obstacles, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin told a group of new missionary journeymen.

The board commissioned 68 journeymen during a July 21 service at Grove Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., bringing the number of journeymen serving worldwide to 193. Since the program's inception in 1965, 2,650 college graduates under the age of 30 have been named to two-year terms as journeymen.

Rankin reminded the group how God helped the Israelites cross the flooded Jordan River as they went in to possess the Promised Land.

Reading from Joshua 3, he noted that as the Israelites stepped into the raging river, the waters rolled back and the people crossed on dry ground.

"You will encounter obstacles -- conflict, government red tape and visa problems," he told the young people. "But you must keep following God in faith that he will roll back those obstacles.

"You are not taking God to the people you will serve," he added. "God is already there, opening doors in providence and power ... calling nations to repentance and faith. What a privilege to join him in that task."

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(BP) photos (horizontals) mailed July 29 to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutlines available in SBCNet News Room.

**Wayland University
at Glorieta dedicated**

By John Loudat

**Baptist Press
7/30/96**

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Wayland Baptist University at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center officially opened its doors July 29 with a dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Representatives and friends of the university, the Baptist Sunday School Board and the Baptist Convention of New Mexico gathered to celebrate a partnership. Among leaders in the dedication were WBU President Wallace Davis, BSSB President James T. Draper Jr. and Baptist Convention of New Mexico Executive Director Claude Cone.

The new campus is the latest extension of WBU. Other campuses are located in Lubbock, Amarillo, San Antonio and Wichita Falls, Texas; Anchorage, Alaska; Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.; Aiea, Hawaii. Wayland's main campus is in Plainview, Texas.

Approximately 70 people attended the event just inside the entrance of the conference center at a log building housing the offices of the new learning center.

Glorieta director Larry Haslam recognized 97-year-old Harry P. Stagg, BCNM executive director from 1932-62, who, he said, was largely responsible for convincing the Southern Baptist Convention to locate its western conference center at Glorieta.

Haslam described the "joint venture" between Southern Baptists, Texas Baptists and New Mexico Baptists, with Glorieta providing the physical facilities, Wayland operating the educational program and the New Mexico convention helping secure scholarship funds.

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One day earlier, nearby Glorieta Baptist Church became the first New Mexico church to provide scholarships by pledging to grant two students \$500 per year.

Haslam credited Ray Ezelle, director of Glorieta's sales and marketing, with starting the process that led to the establishment of the only Baptist university operation in New Mexico.

Wayland at Glorieta director Fred Teague called the endeavor "unusual" and "unprecedented," listing some of the needs that will be met by the new effort:

-- a Christian college in the state to which parents can send their children for teaching in a Christian manner and from a Christian perspective;

-- opportunity for strengthening Baptist churches in New Mexico by preparing Christian leaders for service in the state; and

-- "stem the brain drain" from New Mexico. Often, Teague explained, many of New Mexico's finest Baptist young people leave the state to go to college, never to return to work in the state.

Draper called Wayland at Glorieta "the Cadillac of extension programs," and asked, "Can you imagine a greater place to study?"

Wayland President Davis said the new learning center offers "unique possibilities" for the university. When Wayland's "two torches" of academic knowledge and the light of the Creator come together, Davis said, the result is the transformation of "ordinary individuals into extraordinary forces ... for that which is godly."

Classes will begin Sept. 3 with up to a dozen students, Teague said. A two-year curriculum is offered for persons interested in pursuing a four-year degree.

Classes will be held on the first and second floors of the classrooms behind Holcomb Auditorium. Part of New Mexico Hall will serve as student activity center. Housing and meals will be available at the conference center, as well as housing for single and married students.

Interested persons may contact Wayland at Glorieta by writing to P.O. Box 282, Glorieta, NM 87535 or by calling (505) 757-3072.

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(BP) photo posted in SBCNet News Room.

Speakers say Calvinism fuels zeal in missions, evangelism

By James A. Smith Sr.

**Baptist Press
7/30/96**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--The Christian obligation to engage in missions and evangelism is an integral part of the "doctrines of grace," said two speakers at the 14th annual Southern Baptist Founders Conference, July 23-26 at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.

The Founders Conference is attended by Southern Baptists who hold to the doctrines of grace, known most widely by the title, "Calvinism," and who contend this system of theology was held by the men who established the Southern Baptist Convention.

Missions professor George Martin and evangelist R.F. Gates both also contended the doctrines of grace are the most effective basis for missions and evangelism, in contrast to critics who say Calvinism is a deterrent to winning the lost. Martin will begin teaching this year in the Billy Graham School of Evangelism and Church Growth at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Gates is a Southern Baptist evangelist from Shreveport, La.

"There is nothing that will shake our people out of their slumber and lack of concern for world missions like a good dose of the doctrines of grace!" Martin declared.

The doctrines of grace constitute the five points of Calvinism which gained its name from 16th-century Protestant reformer John Calvin and which were codified in 1619 at the Dutch Reformed Church's Synod of Dort.

Preaching from Romans 15:17-21, Martin urged the conferees to pattern their ministry after the apostle Paul.

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Noting comments from well-meaning Southern Baptists skeptical that sincere Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and followers of other religions will not make it to heaven, Martin said, "These statements and inquiries ... betray a mind-set that is at best ambivalent toward missions, and at worst absolutely destroys missions and world evangelism among the lost."

The general principle which governed the life and ministry of Paul, Martin said, was that "Paul intended to preach the gospel of Christ where it had not been heard so that God would be served and Christ would be glorified."

Paul's principle is in stark contrast to that of most believers today, Martin said.

"It seems the typical response today, even among those called to full-time ministry, goes something like, 'What will it cost me? What will I have to put up with?'" Martin said.

"In case you're wondering, it will cost a great deal," the former missionary to Indonesia said. "It will cost you more than you have ever imagined."

Martin also stressed that Paul was "obedient to the divine charge" of preaching the gospel, in contrast to many Christians today who do missions on the basis of "meeting perceived needs."

"The problem with lost man is that his perception is corrupted. He's blind. He doesn't understand his real need," Martin contended.

Paul preached the gospel because he had "a settled conviction that without the gospel men would die under condemnation and judgment," Martin said.

"I want to tell you, a full-orbed, evangelical and biblical Calvinism is not a deterrent to world evangelization," Martin said. "Rather, it is the catalyst and driving force that will propel laborers into the fields already white unto harvest."

In response to puzzled friends who couldn't understand why a Calvinist would become a missionary, Martin said he told them, "We are going because we are convinced that Christ was slain, and with his blood he has purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. In every nation God has a chosen people, and he has always been and remains in the business of calling them out and saving them by the preaching of the gospel. We're going to Indonesia to get those folks!"

Although many Christians claim they have not been called to missions, Martin said, "The Word of God is full of instructions already for us to go into all the world with the gospel. I don't know how we can read them and be still."

Preaching from Ezekiel 37 concerning the account of the "dry bones," evangelist Gates sounded themes similar to those in Martin's address.

Offering a practical application of the passage which deals with the restoration of Israel, Gates said, "I would address you as those of us who are in the valley of the bones."

The Ezekiel passage illustrates how Calvinists should go about their duty of evangelism, Gates said.

The place of evangelism is "the place where his providence places you," Gates said, even when it is in the valley of dry bones.

"I don't know why I live on Reva Ridge Street in Shreveport, though I do know this: I'm there for divine purpose and I'm not just there to enjoy the air-conditioned house," Gates joked.

Gates also said ministers should understand the preparation needed for evangelism.

"In preparing for evangelism that's true evangelism, we need to face the ultimate question that is asked" by God in the Ezekiel passage, Gates said. "Can these bones live?"

"Yes, they can live," Gates answered. "But their resurrection is by his good pleasure, his eternal purpose, his amazing grace and his giving Spirit. You alone know, Lord. You are sovereign here."

Another part of the preparation for evangelism is that, according to Gates, "He puts man in the miracle. ... He is the Lord, but he uses the laborers. ... There is a part for man to play."

Concerning the matter of "success" in evangelism, "Are we to produce or just to proclaim?" Gates asked.

"The more we're at it and the longer we go on, the more clearly it dawns upon us that, humanly speaking, evangelism is a hopeless task. We cannot bring men to a saving closure with Christ. The sovereignty of God in grace gives us our only hope of success in evangelism," Gates said.

Although it is true there should be urgency in the task of evangelism, "the urgency is not an issue of attempting to compel men to cross a line and call them saved because they get out of the danger zone," Gates asserted.

"It's not that. We must do what he says and that is simply preach the unsearchable riches of Christ with love in our heart.

We're to go to all men, leave out none. Give a free and simple offer of the gospel to all the bones and not just those we feel are the elect bones," Gates said.

In addition to constant prayer, "for success in evangelism I need to stay at, it believing that God tells the truth," Gates said. "There will be a harvest. There will be victory. God promised it!"

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**To Southern Baptist Calvinists,
speaker lists pastoral cautions**

By James A. Smith Sr.

**Baptist Press
7/30/96**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--An "undue narrowness" often "afflicts Reformed folks" and is harmful to the gospel, asserted a pastor during the 14th annual Southern Baptist Founders Conference.

"Should it be my prime pastoral goal to get everyone in my church to be a five-point Calvinist? No," Mark Dever told the July 23-26 gathering of Southern Baptist Calvinists at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.

"It should be my earnest desire to see everyone in my charge in heaven, not in Geneva," Dever said to the amusement of the audience in referring to the center of Protestant reform under John Calvin.

Although theological distinctives are important, "there is not going to be an undue narrowness in the heart of someone who knows themselves to be saved by God's grace," said Dever, pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church, Washington.

"I describe myself to my congregation, though not on Sunday mornings, as a slobbering five-point Calvinist," Dever said. "But I don't for a moment care if they call themselves Calvinists. I care very much that they be disciples of Jesus Christ, that they be forgiven of their sins by his precious blood."

Noting a strong Arminian bent in many evangelical churches today -- an opposite understanding from Calvinism of God's work of salvation, taking its name from the movement's founder, Jacobus Arminius -- Dever said: "Our basic question (of church members) should usually be, 'Are they oriented towards God's grace or do they seem to be opposing it?'"

Dever illustrated the point by telling of a recent convert in his church who was troubled by a book he had given her to read advocating the doctrine of limited atonement, one of the five points of Calvinism, that Christ's death applies only to those chosen by God.

"I'm not going to harry her out of church because she doesn't ascent to limited atonement, which brings up all kinds of questions in her mind about God being cruel. No, I'm going to keep loving her and praying for her and teaching her the Bible. And as long as I see in her a spirit which desires to see God be given the glory, then I'll thank God for the privilege to shepherd a sheep like that," Dever said.

"I don't want to have an undue narrowness which I have to say often afflicts Reformed folks," Dever said. "Rather, then, we should just confess it."

Dever also cautioned against "undue inquisitiveness" concerning certain matters of theology.

"Be careful, my more theologically minded brother and sister, what you do with these truths when it comes to the problem of evil," Dever said. "More than one great Reformed theologian has made hash of himself by tying too closely God's decrees and our actions."

Noting that certain questions about sin and evil in the world simply cannot be answered, Dever said, "We are in no moral position, even with the best Reformed theology, to put God in a dock and to arraign him. We must speak what he has revealed of himself and leave it there."

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**Jesse Mercer described
as example for Calvinists**

By James A. Smith Sr.

**Baptist Press
7/30/96**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--While careful to warn against worshipping historical figures, the life of Baptist statesman Jesse Mercer was highlighted as a model pastor/theologian during the 14th annual Southern Baptist Founders Conference, July 23-26 at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.

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Calling Mercer "one of my theological and historical heroes," Bill Haynes, pastor of First Baptist Church of Sweetwater, Fla, presented a biographical sketch of the Georgia Baptist leader.

The Founders Conference is attended by Southern Baptists who hold to the "doctrines of grace," known most widely by the title, "Calvinism," and who contend this system of theology was held by the men responsible for establishing the Southern Baptist Convention.

Although he died four years before the SBC's founding in 1845, "Jesse Mercer had a profound influence on the theological development of what was to become the Southern Baptist Convention," Haynes said.

Noting the university in Macon, Ga., is named for Mercer, Haynes contended, "The theology that is taught in that school today bears very little resemblance to the theology of its founder and namesake."

In addition to being one of the founders and the first president of the Georgia Baptist Convention in 1822, "Jesse Mercer was first and foremost a pastor," Haynes said. "He loved his people and desired above all that genuine revival come to the churches he pastored as well as the churches of the nation."

Mercer "took much pains to establish his churches in the truth," said Haynes, asserting that a critical part of Mercer's understanding of truth included the doctrines of grace.

The doctrines of grace constitute the five points of Calvinism which gained its name from 16th-century Protestant reformer John Calvin and which were codified in 1611 at the Dutch Reformed Church's Synod of Dort.

In 1833 Mercer bought The Columbian Star, moved the newspaper to Georgia and renamed it The Christian Index in order to propagate Calvinism, Haynes asserted.

"In letters to Basil Manly, Mercer indicated that he bought the paper because he did not feel it had the right Baptist trend and it was his duty to lay out the Calvinistic doctrine in plain words which no reader could misunderstand. And he clearly set out to do just that," Haynes said.

The strong advocacy of Calvinism by Mercer is demonstrated in his publication of sermons, confessions of faith and other literature expounding the doctrine, Haynes said.

Mercer "held to the great truths of the doctrines of grace with clear proclamation. He feared that the preachers of the Baptist denomination were giving into the tickling words of a watered-down gospel," Haynes said.

Explaining the purpose of publishing 1689 London Confession of Faith in The Christian Index, Haynes quoted Mercer as saying, "... this venerable little book does contain the doctrines, systematically arranged, which are held by the old-fashioned, Calvinistic Baptists the world over."

"The Christian Index with Jesse Mercer as editor was not just a Baptist newspaper," Haynes said. Although he had Baptist news, the paper was "more than half-filled with doctrinal and scriptural expositions."

Calling upon the example of the life of Jesse Mercer, Haynes said, "May we be challenged to stand firm in the gospel. Proclaim the truth of God's Word, the truth of God's doctrines of grace."

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**Camp for 'preachers' kids'
offers support, encouragement**

By Shelley Fowler

**Baptist Press
7/30/96**

SHOCCO SPRINGS, Ala. (BP)--Growing up in a minister's family adds pressure during adolescence, but "preachers' kids" at MASH (Ministers' Adolescents Support Happenings) camp found new ways to deal with the stress.

Camp director John Long, discipleship training associate for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, developed MASH camp to help teenage children of ministers. "I saw a need. There was a hurt in (ministers') teens from parents not spending a lot of time with them or from being used as sermon illustrations. I wanted to look at something to give them support and encouragement."

Now in its fifth year, MASH showed the seventh- through 12th-grade teens the benefits and also discussed the drawbacks of growing up in a minister's family. This year's July 7-12 camp was at Shocco Springs (Ala.) Baptist Assembly.

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"We want them to come here and know that there are more (ministers' kids) with the same frustrations, the same feelings and the same pressures," Long said.

Some common pressures for children of ministers, Long said, include expectations of perfection, criticism of their parents and themselves, expectations of a thorough knowledge of the Bible and Christianity, and a lack of freedom to be themselves.

"People expect me to be a perfect child, but I have the same problems as everyone else," said Marsha Glenn, a member of Grandview Baptist Church in Dothan.

Glenn said that despite all the drawbacks, she would not change the fact that she is a minister's daughter. "The spiritual aspect is high. And if I have any questions, I can go ask my dad. Sometimes you can't find anyone with the answers to some of the deep questions," she said.

Long said that through a series of workshops and activities that teach communication skills and relationship management, the teens learned about other advantages of being a minister's child.

"They're raised in a Christian home," Long said. "They have high-spirited parents who set goals and strive to meet them. They have the support of their church and the people they meet, such as missionaries and seminary professors."

Long said he wants the camp to give the teens an opportunity to interact with each other as well as learn ways to handle the added pressures placed on them.

"We emphasize personal faith formation," said Long. "We focus on their personal relationship with the Lord apart from their parents and their church. We help them sense what they can become."

The 42 students led all the worship services at the camp. "They learn what it takes for their parents to prepare for a service," Long said. "It's not just something you throw together. It's takes time to plan and prepare."

The teens also participated in the adventure recreation program at Shocco. "We let them do the ropes course each year to build leadership and trust. With so many ministers being dismissed from churches, the kids see a lot of promises not being fulfilled, and we want them to know that there are people they can trust," Long said

Glenn, a second-year camper, said trust is something she has learned. "There's a lot of pressure put on ministers' kids, and this is something you can look back on to help you with your life."

Ben Tobias, a member of Trinity Baptist Church in Madison, Ala., has attended MASH four years. "You form a family different from other camps," Tobias said.

Long said that the teens will meet again at a reunion in December.

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Fowler is an intern with the Alabama State Board of Missions.

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