



BAPTIST PRESS
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November 24, 1970

**President Sees Baptists,
Defends American System**

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Richard Nixon received 41 leaders of the North American Baptist Fellowship and the Baptist World Alliance for a 30-minute meeting in his White House office here.

The President in extemporaneous remarks to the Baptists declared that moral and spiritual strength are more important to America than are wealth and military might.

Other great powers have risen and are now gone, the President said, because they lost their moral and spiritual strength. For this reason, he continued, your function as religious leaders is "one maybe even more important than mine."

Discussing the responsibility of America as a world power, Nixon said that the nation had arrived at such a position "almost by accident."

"Americans," he said, "have not liked the idea of world power," but the nation has arisen to its position for peace-keeping purposes.

The President disavowed before the Baptist leaders that the United States has any desire to conquer or dominate. "But we do have the desire that all nations grow up in peace, choose their own government, religion and way of life," he said.

The President hit at youth movements designed to overthrow the American system. He agreed with the youth who dislike war, but he then defended the system that has enabled America to render aid to under privileged nations, even former enemies.

He pointed out that it has been with American aid that Japan and Germany have risen from defeated nations to the third and fourth most powerful nations in the world today. The President also pointed out help that his administration has given aid to Romania, Peru and now Pakistan.

"The fact that America can do this is significant," the President continued. "Everyone should feel compassion, but we are able to do these things because of our system."

Rather than overthrow the American system, the President declared, "let's clean up what is wrong and back up what is right."

Just before meeting with the President the Baptist leaders were given an hour-long tour of the White House with a special guide.

The meeting with the President was arranged through the efforts of Robert S. Denny, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance.

The Baptist leaders were in the nation's capital for meetings of the youth, relief and administrative committees of the Baptist World Alliance, and for a meeting of the central committee of the North American Baptist Fellowship.

V. Carney Hargroves of Philadelphia is president of the Baptist World Alliance and Duke K. McCall of Louisville is the outgoing chairman of the North American Baptist Fellowship.

Marshall Elected Missouri
Student Work Secretary

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)--A professional engineer turned religious worker with students has been elected the new state secretary of Baptist Student work in Missouri, effective Jan. 1, 1971.

William L. Marshall, 37, former director of Baptist student activities for the metropolitan area of Kansas City, Mo., was named to succeed Elgin Lee in the post by the Executive Board of the Missouri Baptist Convention with offices here.

Marshall will direct the convention's work with students on 35 Missouri campuses. A native of Mt. Vernon, Mo., Marshall is a graduate of Missouri University, Columbia, with a degree in mechanical engineering; and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City.

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Baptist Family Tends Retarded,
Handicapped Children At Home

BAPTIST PRESS FEATURE

by James Lee Young

NOVATO, Calif. (BP)--Seven-year-old Matt didn't want to go home.

Leaving the television set in the living room of the Adams home where two other boys were engrossed in a cartoon show, Matt climbed into the lap of Ren Adams, "Can we go play with the wagon," he asked plaintively. "We'll see, maybe in a little while," Adams replied.

It was a typical scene in the home of Ren and Judy Adams. Matt was not their son. Neither were the two other boys.

They were three of more than 100 youngsters between the ages of three and 21 who have found a brief home with the Adams family at the "Big R" Respite here since August, 1969.

Ren and Judy, a young Southern Baptist couple in their mid-20's, play temporary mother and father to mentally retarded and physically handicapped children for two to three weeks at a time.

The "Big R" is designed to give children, like Matt who has six sisters at home, an opportunity to spend time with children or young people of similar ages. It also gives them an experience in independent living and social development, and provides a sometimes needed "vacation" for the parents.

Ren is a student at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. He and Judy are both graduates of Grand Canyon College, and he is a former pastor of a Baptist church in British Columbia, Canada.

He and Judy became involved in the "Big R" program after Ren decided his part-time job as a security guard for a banking firm did not offer enough personal fulfillment in helping people. The seminary informed them of a meeting regarding the "Big R" pilot program of helping children, and they were hired to direct it that same night.

Judy is employed full-time as a houseparent, while Ren is busy pursuing full-time studies toward the pastoral ministry. Within six weeks, they were in a home caring for five children, ages 7-12.

The "Big R" is operated by a special committee of the Marin (County) Aid to Retarded Children with assistance from several other civic and governmental agencies.

Because of the program's nature, the Adams family says they cannot actively seek to convert the children who stay in their home, but they do take them to church services at First Baptist Church, Novato, with permission from the children's parents.

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They also read Bible stories and have prayer at mealtimes. "Judy and I try to show them what a Christian couple and family can be like," Ren said. When the kids ask questions about their faith, Ren and Judy try to provide simple answers.

To many of the children, being with other youngsters and having temporary parents like the Adams is a happy experience. Ren says most of the teenagers don't want to go home after they've been in the home for two or three weeks.

Plenty of activity is given the young people (of all ages) while they are with the Adams family. Parents of the mentally retarded or physically handicapped often take a vacation while the children are under their care.

The children usually need a vacation too, "so we give them plenty of fun things to do that they can talk about and say they had a vacation too," Ren said.

Activities for the youngsters have included bowling, going to the movies, football games, picnics and visiting a local firehouse.

Recently, the Adamses and five of their charges went to the Terra Linda High School homecoming football game, so Debbie, 17, could see her school's team in action.

Debbie is a bright, creative teenager who has been crippled with cerebral palsy. Unable to use her hands effectively, she types with a specially designed stick held between her teeth--writes poetry and other creative pieces:

Debbie is still confined to her wheelchair, or to a mobile sling, but her cheerful attitude and smile are contagious.

Ren is concerned about the lack of counseling for the physically handicapped and their parents as he may pursue studies related to that area, in addition to his now planned career as a minister.

The Adamses say that working with these children has given them new depths of patience and understanding that should help a great deal in their future ministry for Jesus Christ.

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BP PHOTOS to be mailed to Baptist state papers.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: James Lee Young is news director for Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif.



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