



BAPTIST PRESS
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April 28, 1972

**Miami Baptists Plan Effort
To Reach Democrats, Radicals**

MIAMI (BP)--When the Democratic National Convention gets underway here July 9-14, Southern Baptists in Miami, bolstered by an estimated 2,000 youth from across the nation, plan to blitz the delegates and radical demonstrators alike with the gospel message.

Officials of the Miami Baptist Association hope their efforts at personal witnessing and Christian literature distribution, and musical presentations will convert the unconverted, rejuvenate the faith of the unfaithful, and quell any tensions that might arise in the demonstrations that are likely to take place during the national political convention.

"Man, we want to do something positive," said Richard Bryant, director of city missions for the Miami Baptist Association that is sponsoring the effort, called "Demo '72." "We've got something to say and we think it'll work."

The association's evangelism committee, plus Bryant and Florida Baptist Convention evangelism secretary James A. Ponder, have issued a call for "hundreds of dedicated, mature Christian college and high school students to help us."

Bryant, in a telephone interview, said that already nearly 700 youth have responded, and by July 9 when the convention gets underway, he expects 2,000 to do so.

The youth will include several hundred "Jesus people" led by Southern Baptist street minister Sammy Tippit, who will concentrate on reaching the radical demonstrators who come to confront the delegates to the convention.

"We have been told that there will be 10,000 radicals demonstrating in the nude" at the convention, Tippit said in an interview with the Illinois Baptist. "We want church and youth groups to pray, and to send their young people to help us turn the tide against the radical elements at the convention."

In addition to Tippit, who heads a street ministry in Chicago called "God's Love in Action," the pastor of New Orleans' Coliseum Place Baptist Church, John T. Curtis, has written to Bryant wanting to help. Bryant said Curtis, a former football player and amateur boxer, "will be able to do a dialogue with any radical there is."

Bryant explained that in addition to the effort to reach the radical demonstrators by the "Jesus people" youth, there will also be a massive, concerted effort by "establishment kids" to reach delegates to the convention through singing, personal witnessing and literature distribution.

"The way I see it," Bryant said, "we're going to have some of the most influential people in the world at this convention. Not just candidates either, but delegates as well. They're the people behind the power."

"If we can reach these, then we'll be making a major gain. Some of them may already be Christians, but need rejuvenation," he continued.

How do they plan to do it?

Most of the effort hinges on an attempt to saturate the city with Christian literature, mostly in the form of daily news-sheets that emphasize Christian tenets concerning the life of Jesus and what these tenets mean today. The sheets will be called, "The Daily Forever News." On the back of each sheet will be what Bryant calls "Minute Messages."

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DARGAN-OARVEE
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Youth who pass out the sheets at the convention hall, in hotels, bars, shopping centers and on the beaches will use "The Daily Forever News" as vehicles to get into personal witnessing, Bryant said.

Another phase of the youths' attempt to reach the delegates will be the use of musical groups, both inside and outside the convention hall.

A 125-member choir sponsored and organized by the Riverside Baptist Church of Miami, called the "New Directions" has been invited to sing four times a day for five days to the delegates of the convention. It will be a kind of gospel-rock-patriotic presentation, Bryant said.

The choir is an interfaith, interracial group of youth ranging from ages 13 to 27. Directed by Jack Day, a composer-arranger who studied with Fred Waring and at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, "The New Directions" sing to the accompaniment of three trumpets, two trombones, three guitars, electric bass, drums, electronic piano and organ, and flute.

In addition to "The New Directions" singing inside the convention hall, numerous other Christian folk music and rock groups from Baptist churches in the area will sing and play in hotels, shopping centers, parks and on beaches.

In order to participate, the youth must attend training sessions beginning July 6 prior to the convention which starts July 9. A massive prayer rally will be held to launch the effort, with several governors and political leaders invited to participate, said Bryant, who was director of missions for Southern Baptists in San Diego, Calif., before coming here.

"As far as we could determine from talking to convention officials," said Bryant, "our effort will be the first large-scale Christian witness ever attempted at the convention.

"I feel some big things are going to happen," Bryant concluded.

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Hotel Rooms Almost Gone
For SBC in Philadelphia

4/28/72

PHILADELPHIA (BP)--With more than 4,000 hotel rooms reserved by mid-April by persons planning to attend the Southern Baptist Convention, convention officials here reported only three hotels had 66 unclaimed room reservation openings for the week of the convention, June 5-9.

Three other hotels, however, were still holding 962 rooms reserved in "blocks" for specific groups.

A comparison of reservations made for the SBC last year in St. Louis and the SBC in Philadelphia disclosed that almost the same number of rooms had been reserved by mid-April for the two meetings.

"It appears that we are running pretty much on the same schedule as last year of this date," said John H. Williams of Nashville, financial planning secretary for the SBC Executive Committee.

As of April 19, 1972, a total of 4,086 rooms had been assigned in Philadelphia, compared to 3,924 rooms assigned in St. Louis as of April 16, 1971.

Williams said that some additional rooms are expected to be available by the first of May after the "block" reservations are assigned to specific individuals.

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Joy, Hope, Relevance, Studied
At Bible Conference - East

4/28/72

RICHMOND (BP)--More than 1,400 persons met at First Baptist Church here to study the Bible as a message of joy and hope and to discover the Bible's relevance to contemporary life during the National Bible Conference - East.

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The sessions sounded the same themes of hope and joy that were voiced a month earlier at a similar National Bible Conference - West in Denver. Both were sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville in cooperation with local and area Baptists.

Featuring six Bible book studies, three conferences on the Bible and contemporary concerns, a joint conference on Philippians and four evening messages, the sessions here were led by noted Southern Baptist pastors and professors from across the nation.

Speaking at the opening session of the conference, Carl Bates, president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church, Charlotte, N.C., told conferees that the word of God, the gospel and experience are producers of hope.

Through these, he said, man finds hope of eternal life, hope for righteousness and hope for the resurrection. Joy in life, he concluded, comes as a result of these sources of hope.

During a "youth night" service concurrent with the opening session, Larry Rohrman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., told about 300 high school students that there are influences in the world that cause men to follow "the beat of the wrong drummer."

"There is a way to know the right way to go," said Rohrman, "and that is by reading God's Word."

Later in the week, speaking to the entire conference on "Hope and Its Promises," Rohrman told participants that "Christ in you is the only hope of solving the horrendous problems" of the world.

Speaking of the role of the social gospel, Rohrman said, "There are some preachers who are trying to move too fast and therefore, lose some they are trying to lead. . . . My definition of a preacher is one who leads people toward God as fast as he can, but goes as slow as he has to. . . . When a man starts thinking like Jesus, acting like Jesus, and being like Jesus, he cannot hate any man."

Luther Joe Thompson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Richmond, speaking on "The Pursuit of Happiness" noted that "happiness is a major Bible concern, approached with sensitivity and seriousness both in the Old and New Testaments."

In discussing the ways to achieve happiness, he included discovering life's ultimate meaning and purpose, coming to terms with oneself and God, settling the really important questions and finding usefulness.

The concluding message was brought by Dale Moody, professor of Christian Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Other conference leaders in Bible studies were John D. W. Watts, and Clyde T. Francisco, both professors of Old Testament at Southern Seminary in Louisville; Fred M. Wood, pastor, Eudora Baptist Church, Memphis; L. D. Johnson, chaplain, Furman University, Greenville, S.C.; A. Stuart Arnold, consultant, Sunday School department, SBC Sunday School Board, Nashville; Henry Turlington, pastor, University Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, N.C.; Charles A. Trentham, pastor, First Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn.; E. D. McCreary, professor of philosophy of religion, Virginia Union University, Richmond; and Henry M. Chiles, pastor, Central Baptist Church of Bearden, Knoxville.

Also conducting studies were Charles L. Holland, pastor, Briggs Memorial Baptist Church, Bethesda, Md.; J. Larry Mayo, pastor, Warrington (Fla.) Baptist Church; Theodore F. Adams, professor, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; Dale Cowling, pastor, Second Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark.; John M. Lewis, pastor, First Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C.; Wayne Barnes, pastor, First Baptist Church, Zachary, La.; and Henlee H. Barnette, professor of ethics, Southern Seminary.

The National Bible Conference - East was sponsored by the Sunday School department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, the Baptist General Convention of Virginia, the Virginia Baptist Convention, the Richmond Baptist Association, The Dover Baptist Association and the Middle River Baptist Association.

According to conference coordinator Chester Russell of the Sunday School Board, other associational, state and national Bible conferences are planned for 1973.



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