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June 12, 1973

SBC Pastors Urged To Equip For Effective Ministry

By Robert C'Brien

PORTLAND (BP)--Pastors attending the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference examined ways to equip themselves for more effective ministry, then set a precedent by selecting a father-son combination as their president and vice president.

At a daylong meeting at the Memorial Coliseum, the pastors elected Jaroy Weber, pastor of Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala., and his son, Billy Weber, pastor of Northway Baptist Church, Dallas, as conference president and vice president.

Harold Coble, pastor of First Baptist Church, Midway, Calif., was elected secretary.

R.G. Lee, the silver-named, silver-tongued orator of another Southern Baptist era, closed the annual session preceding the 116th meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention with an hour-long exposition on what it was like "when preachers preached."

The 86-year-old pastor emeritus of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., lived up to his promise to preach a sermon, not a sermonette. Sermonettes produce Christianettes, he explained.

Lee, former Southern Baptist Convention president, challenged his "young" listeners to "mount up like eagles" in their preaching.

"When preaching gets out of date, Christianity will be out of date. Preaching must be magnificent, not mediocre."

Lee led his listeners through a star-studded roster of great preachers from the Old Testament of the 20th century.

"Sermons have changed lives. But preachers must preach the word of God. Preachers who don't do that have their brains close to the coffin lid."

Lee shared the podium at the final session with a battery of other preachers and a missionary.

Jess Moody, pastor of First Baptist Church, West Palm Beach, Fla., chided "Bible quoters" who spend so much time defending the deity of Christ that they forget his humanity.

"Most of the New Testament was written to prove his humanity to a gnostic world."

Miss Rachel Saint, a well publicized missionary to the Auca Indians in Ecuador who won converts among the Indians who speared her brother to death, described efforts of the Wycliffe Bible Translators to reach all dialects and spread the Christian message in competition with Black Magic, occultism and devil worship.

S. Franklin Logsdon, a Bible teacher from Largo, Fla., also warned pastors to equip themselves against Satanic powers which oppose the Christian gospel. He reminded them of the scriptural injunction that "the word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword."

Joseph B. Underwood of Richmond, Va., consultant for evangelism and church development at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, told the pastors how spiritual renewal has swept the world through foreign mission efforts as he plugged for involvement in a world reconciliation movement.

In an earlier session, speakers challenged fellow ministers to broaden their perspective on ministry and to avoid binding themselves to a one dimensional approach.

The men emphasized personal evangelism, unwavering faith in God's leadership, keeping the spiritual household (the church) in order, keeping personal "equipment" in repair, and "plugging in" to God's "power source."

Padgett C. Cope, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark., said personal witness to non-Christians is "obligatory, not optional."

Emphasizing the importance of personal soul winning as an essential piece of equipment for pastor, Cope said, "We just seem to swap members and not go out and win souls for Christ. All the religions of the world are in search of God. Christianity is not just a religion but a way of life."

"Faith is the principle by which God operates in the world," said J.C. Mitchell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Winter Park, Fla.

"Faith is the key that moves God out of heaven and down to earth. Our church members want to see the power of God at work," Mitchell said.

A Virginia pastor confronted the pastor-husband-father who must lead two families--an earthly one and a spiritual one.

"The personality traits in the households of faith should be community, communion and communication," said Charles Fuller, pastor of First Baptist Church, Roanoke.

He defined the church as being "God's thoughtful provision in an unbelieving world."

Harper Shannon, pastor of Huffman Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala., talked about the pastor's personal "equipment"--a sense of divine calling, an inner compulsion that the ministry is God's will, an outward compassion of others, intellectual stimulation and a willingness to do God's will.

Both Shannon and Jack Taylor, pastor of Castle Hills First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., emphasized that the pastor's equipment is useless without the power of God's Holy Spirit.

"Those pieces of equipment are dead appliances unless they are plugged in to the Holy Spirit," Taylor said.

"Great is the controversy regarding the Holy Spirit. I hope we stop being divided on the definitions. It doesn't matter what we call it as long as we have it."

E.V. Hill, a black pastor from Mount Zion Baptist Church, Los Angeles, evoked a homerun type response by creating an imaginary situation in which he served as the Pope of Southern Baptists.

"If I were Pope of Southern Baptists, I would make it a sin for all preachers to just preach a first base gospel in which man only reconciles himself to Jesus Christ.

"Man must proceed to the second base of reconciling himself to his fellow man. When a man departs from the Gospel, he's not liberal, he's lost."

Hill explained that the third base gospel is community development by Christians before going to home base.

"Love that Jesus gave us requires a response--a response of touching hands of men from every corner of the globe. The alternative is that God will take away the enthusiasm of Southern Baptists and move on to somebody else."

Weber addressed the pastors on "Preaching to Broken Hearted People" just before they elected him president.

"As preachers, we must come to know our people, our own lives and the gospel. When you stand up to preach, there is a broken heart on every pew. In an effort to reach the masses, preachers often forget about lonely souls.

"Pastors must know their own hearts better than their names. Let your congregation know that the same problems in their lives are present in yours," Weber said.

John Bisagno, a former president of the pastors' conference, preached on how pastors become evangelists.

"Most of us don't have the gift to reach thousands like the super-evangelists. But there are special things important to God as equipment for becoming evangelists," Bisagno said.

"Pastors thwart the will of God when they play the role of the preacher superhuman. Whatever you do, be yourself. God made each man and each is important to Him.

Clyde Martin, pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Macon, Ga., told the pastors, "We are preaching to a new breed of mankind. The church must be aware we no longer live in the spiritual awakening of the 1700's. Modern man is now experiencing a fall second only to the Genesis fall."

Martin said that in the year 2,000 more than six billion people will fill the world, more than twice today's population, and the biggest growth will come within the heart of the cities. He called for churches to break out of the beautiful walls of the sanctuary to take the Word to a world outside.

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SBC Religious Educators
Assess Watergate Affair

6/12/73

By Theo Sommerkamp

PORTLAND (BP)--Watergate reflects the quality of American life, including what is preached and taught in its churches.

This assessment of the national crisis came from speeches given at the annual conference here of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association. The association's two-day meeting preceded opening of the 114th meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In the closing address to the conference, a Texas pastor said, "This unbelievably squalid affair has seriously affected the international diplomacy of the United States."

Peter McLeod, of First Baptist Church, Waco, Tex., joined an earlier speaker to the conference, Joe David Heacock of Fort Worth, in putting Watergate in a biblical context.

Playing on the term "watergate," McLeod cited Nehemiah 8:3 in which Ezra appeared in "the street that was before the water gate" of Jerusalem to read the law and call the people to repentance.

McLeod, a naturalized American citizen of Scottish birth, declared the people of the United States, experiencing their own Watergate, should let it call them to national repentance and a turn to God.

"Watergate," according to McLeod, "is not a glass through which we look. It is a mirror in which we see ourselves."

He enumerated other evidences of misconduct on the American scene to support his viewpoint--false advertising from Madison Avenue, college students cheating on their examinations, businessmen juggling their expense accounts.

"What I want to know is this. What were all those preachers doing in the White House on Sunday morning? What were they preaching? How were the people responding?"

In an earlier address, Heacock said obedience to Bible teachings would have prevented scandals and corruption in high places.

Heacock, retiring as dean of the School of Religious Education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, warned the 200 conference participants it would be possible to have a Watergate episode in their own denomination.

Heacock did not elaborate on the warning in his speech, but told a reporter later he did not intend to refer to any present or future situation in Southern Baptist life. Rather, Heacock explained, there have been Watergate-like happenings in the history of Southern Baptists as a denomination.

The religious educators, representing churches, denominational boards, and educational institutions, heard success stories on various forms of special ministry by churches.

Harold K. Graves, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., said they should not equate material prosperity with success on the spiritual level.

"We have spent billions of dollars not only on adequate buildings but often on lavish, extravagant, seldom-used buildings," he reminded the group.

"We have often judged our efforts as have our peers by the size and elegance of our church plants, if not alone by the figure of attendance for 75 minutes each Sunday morning," Graves added.

"We have been too content to build a place to gather, organize to bring them in, and count our efforts successful when the numbers grow whether or not the people grow and mature," he said.

He deplored what he termed "self-centeredness in the church."

The conference had heard reports that many Southern Baptist churches today are growing and expanding their outreach into new areas and finding new worshippers through a bus ministry. One church, for example, sends out about 25 school buses on Sunday morning to bring in almost 500 children from various parts of the city.

Gray as commented that this ministry too should be carefully evaluated.

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James L. Sullivan, president of the SBC Sunday School Board, told the religious educators that the denomination has come full cycle through rapid growth, hard work, crisis and upheaval, and adjustments to changes in national life during the past 20 years.

"I am the most optimistic I have ever been as a pastor and denominational leader," Sullivan said. He indicated Southern Baptists may be on the verge of another period of growth and expansion such as they experienced in the mid-1950's.

To achieve it, however, Sullivan said the religious educators and others in prominent roles in Southern Baptist life must follow the example of Moses in "paying the price of leadership" to bring people to the Promised Land.

The association installed Luke E. Williams, Jr., minister of education, First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., as president for the coming year.

It elected three vice-presidents, one for each of its membership categories--churches, denominational boards, and educational institutions. One of them is designated president-elect. The presidency rotates among the three classifications.

Charles A. Tidwell, associate professor of church administration, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, was elected vice-president and designated president-elect. He will succeed Williams next year.

The two other vice-presidents are Jerry M. Stubblefield, minister of education, First Baptist Church, Greenville, S. C., and Miss Helen May, Sunday School department of Louisiana Baptist Convention, Alexandria.

William E. Young, Nashville, was re-elected secretary-treasurer. He is supervisor of the children's section, church training department, Baptist Sunday School Board.

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SBC Adopts Record \$35 Million Budget

6/12/73

PORTLAND (BP)--Messengers to the 116th meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention Tuesday approved a record \$35 million Cooperative Program budget and authorized changes in program statements of 11 SBC agencies.

In approving 14 SBC Executive Committee recommendations, the messengers endorsed a request that Southern Baptist churches be encouraged to stimulate greater lay participation by sharing expenses of lay messengers to the annual convention.

Messengers voted to meet in Atlanta, Ga., June 13-15, 1978 and in Houston, Texas, June 12 to 14th, 1979. They also adopted promotional emphases for convention causes, 1975-79.

Changes in agency program statements included clarification of operating procedures for the Brotherhood Commission, Baptist Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board, Christian Life Commission, Radio and Television Commission, and the extension programs of six seminaries.

An even \$34 million of the record budget will be divided among 20 SBC agencies. The remaining \$1 million is ticketed for capital needs.

The Foreign Mission Board will receive \$17,337,234, largest single budget allotment. The Home Mission Board will get \$6,225,915.

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Wounded Knee Uprising Vicious, But Opened Doors, Women Told

6/12/73

PORTLAND (BP)--The occupation of Wounded Knee, S. D., by members of the American Indian Movement was a vicious thing, but has resulted in missions doors being opened to Baptists as never before, a Southern Baptist missionary said here. Harold Heiney, pastor of Sioux Baptist Chapel, Pine Ridge, S. D., told the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting here that people are returning to Wounded Knee where 350 militants held sway for several weeks in the spring.

The people are fearful because the militants booby-trapped the area with half a ton of dynamite, Heiney said. "Perhaps the militants intended the explosives for the Federal marshals, but we are afraid that children may be the victims." A positive aftermath of the siege has been a new responsiveness by residents of the area to Baptists, Heiney feels. He attributed it to Baptists who stayed and actually risked their lives to help the people during the occupation.

Under the guns of the militants and in the line of fire between militants and Federal marshals, Heiney brought out about 40 people in his van. Besides planting explosives, the militants damaged churches and homes of residents, Heiney charged. "They shot up the statues in a Catholic church and used a cross for target practice in another church."

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Cooper Re-elected SBC
President after Challenge

PORTLAND (BP)--Owen Cooper, a retired Yazoo City, Miss., business executive, was elected here to a second one-year term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention without opposition.

The action, which came as no surprise to most of the messengers to the nation's largest Protestant denomination in session here, took place shortly after Cooper had issued a challenge for Southern Baptists especially the laymen, to share their Christian faith more vigorously.

Cooper, who retired a month ago as president of the Mississippi Chemical Corp., one of the world's largest fertilizer manufacturing firms, called on Southern Baptists to use retired persons in volunteer mission service on a wholesale basis.

The 65-year-old industrialist, the first layman in 13 years elected as president of the convention, estimated that 80,000 Southern Baptists reach retirement age each year.

Cooper estimated that of this number, 975 could and should be recruited annually for two or three years of service in some type of mission work.

Other methods that Cooper suggested for recruiting more mission volunteers, both home and foreign, included Southern Baptist churches releasing pastors or staff workers for a period of several months to work in missions; the pairing of churches so one pastor might serve both congregations while the other was on the mission field; the sending of 2,400 summer student missionaries with support coming from students' churches; and the operation of a job placement service.

"In order to enlist the 5,000 workers needed, I believe all the agencies involved (the Home Mission and Foreign Mission Boards, the Sunday School Board, the Woman's Missionary Union, and the Brotherhood Commission) should jointly develop a plan to establish a way to cooperatively plan, consistently, insistently and persistently call out these volunteers.

"I know there are problems, there are obstacles, there are difficulties, but the idea is valid and if the workers are needed, the problems can be solved, the obstacles removed and the difficulties overcome."

Cooper cited in his address recent advances in the SBC in the areas of renewed zeal for evangelism, an increased concern for missions, a greater commitment for outreach, an expanded involvement of the laity and a larger amount of gifts.

But Southern Baptists shouldn't stop now, Cooper indicated, as he identified a host of problems in the home, society, government, and business that needed their attention.

Speaking on the convention theme of "Share the Word Now," the Baptist leader said the Word needed to be shared because there are more problems in the world than ever before.

"In our permissive society, there has never been more immorality, adultery, divorce, broken homes, sensual sensuality, pornography and illegitimacy.

"The problems of the home are numerous and disastrous. There are frustrated parents, rebellious children, generation gaps, child abuse, divorce and infidelity.

"In our society we find a multiplicity of problems including those inherent in poverty, ignorance, slums, crime, lawlessness, drugs, alcoholism, arson, rioting and in every form of social disorder known to man."

As he continued to detail problems, Cooper said there was a lesson for Southern Baptists in Watergate.

"If from Watergate we learn that there are moral standards, Christian ethics, right and wrong...and that we need to return to the simple virtues of our founding fathers--then Watergate may have been worth the price."

Cooper praised the 6,500 messengers in attendance for the 1972 SBC statistics which yielded over 12 million members, more than \$1 billion in monetary gifts and increases in most organizations.

"We have cause to thank God for His blessings and for the progress our convention has made," he said. "but lest we be lulled into a false sense of security, may I remind you that:

"There was one baptism for each 27 Southern Baptists last year.

"The average church gives less than 10 per cent to state, home and world missions through the Cooperative Program.

"There was a net gain of only 93 churches last year.

"Less than 15 cents per capita was provided last year, the price of a good candy bar, for spreading the gospel through radio and television."

Cooper focused on the approximately 350,000 deacons in the Southern Baptist Convention as an undeveloped source of spreading the faith.

"These are men who have been set aside, who have been ordained, who have hands laid upon them," he said. "I personally believe the deacons are the most under-used special, identifiable group of men in the Southern Baptist Convention."

"The deacons of our 34,000 Southern Baptist churches should be involved in existing and proven methods of sharing the Word and challenged by new and innovative activities which involve them in sharing the Word."

On giving, Cooper reminded that the portion given through the Cooperative Program, the denomination's unified financial plan, has actually declined from 10 per cent in 1942 to 8 1/2 per cent in 1972.

"The Cooperative Program is not perfect, but it is the best plan available to Southern Baptists, and until someone discovers a better way we should not destroy what we have."

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Democracy Is On Trial in USA
Moyers Tells WMU Convention

6/12/73

By Catherine Allen and Orville Scott

PORTLAND (BP)--Democracy is on trial in America today greater than at any time since the Civil War, former White House Press Secretary Bill Moyers told almost 2,000 women attending the Southern Baptist Women's Missionary Union annual meeting here.

Speaking to the women on the title of his book, *Listening to America*, Moyers warned that Americans are "like a huddled group of sheep, waiting for a political messiah."

"Millions of Americans seem to have lost their equilibrium" said Moyers who is public affairs commentator for the Public Broadcasting System, New York City. "So many of the virtues we believed to be indomitable have been shattered.

"The real crisis in America is neither technological nor environmental. The real crisis is moral and political."

Moyers also rapped nationalism which he said has become a competing religion with Christianity. "Sometimes Christianity has been subjected to the subservience of nationalism."

Being citizens of both the political and Christian realms creates pressures for people who want to be useful to both realms, Moyers said.

"Modern man is uncomfortable with the responsibility of free will . . . but isn't it clear now that all we have is you and me. America can be no more democratic than you and I."

Referring to the threat of ethical anarchy in government, Moyers said, "The greatest rebuttal you have is reporters trying to dig out what may be the other side."

Earlier, in a news conference, the former press aide for Lyndon B. Johnson told reporters that the Watergate scandal "is an unprecedented abuse of political power . . . drawing the nation to the edge of a police state."

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Admitting there had been bribery and scandal in previous administrations including the one he served, Moyers said, however, that "this is the first time there has been such a tangled web of deception and scandal directed at the political process itself."

Moyers added that there has been too much collusion between Baptist ministers and public officials, charging that most ministers have failed to preach prophetically and stand in judgment of the morals of public officials like the prophets of the Old Testament.

In business at the two day gathering preceding the 116th meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, the WMU changed its by-laws and reelected national officers. The by-law changes will gradually eliminate members-at-large of the WMU Executive Board, making the board membership consist only of a nationally elected president and secretary and of a vice-president elected from each state WMU.

Mrs. R. L. Mathis, Waco, Tex., was elected to a fifth term as president of WMU, and Mrs. Roy E. Snider, Camden, Ark., to a fifth term as recording secretary.

Several other speakers at the WMU sessions warned of threats to Southern Baptist foreign missions from at home and abroad.

Jesse Fletcher of Richmond, Va., director of the missions support division of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, charged that the convention will commit suicide if it allows anti-missions seeds borne on the winds of change to take root.

Fletcher said some Southern Baptists are lured away from world missions by the desire to concentrate exclusively on domestic crises.

"These problems do not have to be solved before the missionary task can continue. The missionary task has no conditions. Our basic command is to go into all the world."

The threat of the women's liberation movement was cited by Kenneth Chafin, former director of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board, who urged Christian women to remember that they are the only truly liberated women.

Chafin, pastor of South Main Baptist Church in Houston, Tex., called on the WMU to "redig the well of your feminine identity as an aggressive organization of the women and girls in the church."

Mrs. Carlos Owens, a missionary nurse and one of 2507 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in 77 countries, told the women that their missions thrust must be now in Tanzania because of political changes in the young African nation.

Tanzania, a country beset by poverty, ignorance and disease, is seeking assistance from every direction, the missionary explained. She said Communist China's aid to Tanzania has dwarfed that of America and Europe.

Mrs. Mathis, president of WMU, reported on her recent tour of Vietnam.

One of a series of speakers on language missions in the Western United States told the women that the occupation of Wounded Knee, S. D. by members of the American Indian Movement resulted in a great deal of damage to homes and churches, but opened missions doors on the reservation to Baptists.

Harold Heiney, pastor of Sioux Baptist Chapel, Pine Ridge, S. D., attributed the openness to Baptists who risked their lives to help the residents. During the occupation, Heiney brought out about 40 people in his van under guns of the militants.

Mrs. Fern Powers of First Baptist Church, Lacey, Wash., outlined a ministry to international seamen her church performs.

Mrs. Powers and other members of the Lacey church meet ships from various countries, invite the seamen into their homes and church, and take them on tours of the Washington state area.

Brazilian Baptist President Nilson do Amaral Fanini, pastor of First Baptist Church, Niteroi, said Brazil, where the first Southern Baptist church was established in 1882, now has 400,000 Baptists in 2,600 churches. He said the goal for the Baptist Centennial in Brazil in 1982 is one million Baptists in 6,600 churches.

Joining Fanini in citing the success story of Southern Baptist missions in Brazil was Missionary Marjorie Jones. She said Brazilian Baptists are sending out their own missionaries around the world as well as to the interior of Brazil.