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"Faith and Message" Group Starts Its Own Magazine

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ATLANTA (BP)--The Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship, a group of Southern Baptists concerned with alleged "inroads of liberalism" within the denomination, announced here their sponsorship of a new publication, The Southern Baptist Journal.

William A. Powell of Atlanta, the newly named editor, indicated that a major concern of the group and its publication will be "the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible."

The Bible, missions and evangelism will be prominent positive emphases of the group, Powell said.

Powell has resigned effective Nov. 1 as a staff member of the division of evangelism of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here, where he served as a consultant in bus evangelism.

"One of our purposes will be to discourage churches from withdrawing from our denomination and to prevent any split within our denomination," Powell said.

The journal will be published monthly on newsprint in a 16 to 32 page format, and Powell said subscriptions, advertising and gifts from individuals and churches will finance it.

He said churches have been asked not to divert mission gifts to the publication.

He indicated the publication would point out to its readers where it believed individuals employed by the SBC had taken doctrinal positions contrary to those adopted by the body.

He said the group would form a literature committee to read all of the publications of Southern Baptists to detect what they feel are departures from the positions of "the Baptist Faith and Message," a statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.

While Powell said he would not editorially advocate the firing of individuals, he did say that he does not "think it proper for anyone to be employed by Southern Baptist funds to teach in our schools or in our literature that the Bible is not infallible."

Powell said that the group's charter includes two statements from "the Baptist Faith and Message" statement--Article I on the scriptures, which refers to the divine inspiration of the Bible and characterizes it as "truth without any mixture of error," and Article XI, which deals with evangelism and missions.

The Baptist Faith and Message statement includes 17 such articles.

Powell, in resigning from the mission board, said, "There are many who share with deep concern the inroads that liberalism is beginning to make within our great denomination.

"A lack of faith in the Bible as the infallible word of God--truth without any mixture of error--is being precipitated by a few teachers and writers in some strategic places within our denomination," he charged. "And the ever-enlarging emphasis placed upon the old social gospel is dulling some of the cutting edges in evangelism."

Powell, a native of Dothan, Ala., is a graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and has served as a pastor in Alabama and Illinois, as superintendent of missions in Chicago and in the department of survey and special studies at the Home Mission Board.

In commenting on evangelism, Powell said, "I long for the day when our convention will show proper priority for evangelism by giving this division (at the Home Mission Board) the status of a commission. I feel this will result in more support and the freedom necessary for evangelizing our nation."

The Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship, recently incorporated as a non-profit organization under Georgia law, listed as board of directors M. O. Owens Jr. of Gastonia, N.C., Laverne Butler of Louisville, Ky., Bill Sutton of Orlando, Fla., and Leroy Cooper of East Point, Ga.

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Baptist Women Set Worldwide
Day of Prayer, November 5

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WACO, Tex. (BP)--Women on six continents will engage in a world-wide Baptist Women's Day of Prayer, Nov. 5.

Mrs. R. L. Mathis, president of the women's department of the Baptist World Alliance, said that several million women of all races and geographic origin are expected to participate in the day of prayer.

The day of prayer was begun in Europe as an effort to heal the wounds of World War II and soon grew to a worldwide endeavor.

Reports from last November's day of prayer services came from points in the USSR, including both Moscow and Siberia, from African villages and from large cities of Asia.

Some reports from the United States indicated interracial prayer efforts helped bind up divisions that have hindered cooperative activities for decades, according to the Baptist World Alliance.

More than 100,000 copies of the English language edition of a 16-page program book for the day of prayer have been printed and distributed. Some 100 copies of the manuscript were mailed to remote areas even before the English edition was printed, so they could be translated and published in other languages. Mrs. Mathis estimates that some 200,000 copies are available in 100 languages.

Mrs. Mathis, current leader of the international Baptist women's movement, is director of the student union at Baylor University, Waco, and serves also as president of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

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