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**Cooper Challenges Small Churches
During First National Conference**

RIDGECREST, N. C. (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention President Owen Cooper challenged more than 400 small church pastors and laymen to remember they are prophets of God and pace setters in their communities.

"The pace of witness is going to be no faster than you walk; the interest in missions no more than your interest; and the degree of missions and outreach no more than you make it," Cooper said in the keynote address at the first Southern Baptist Convention Small Church Conference here last week.

"Some churches may grow, some stabilize and some may have to disorganize," he said. "I've had an idea of churches, not merging but marrying. They could go together, keep both pastors on the payroll, but send one off as a missionary and then switch six months later. The people will probably get so excited about supporting a full-time missionary that they will want to support him permanently."

Cooper was among convention leaders from the Baptist Home Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood Commission, the Sunday school and church training department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, who met with pastors and laymen in the special four-day conference devoted to examining the future of churches of less than 300 members.

Larry Bryson, who directs rural-urban missions for the Home Mission Board's Division of Associational Services, said the conference was not designed just to discuss the small church, but to air problems as seen to by the churchmen and convention leaders and gear solutions to the problems.

"In these conferences we dealt with the problems and have given the help they need. These pastors and their wives will return and deal with these problems, because they have dealt here with themselves. They also have found that others have some of the same problems," Bryson said.

Conferences which provided practical help were the ABC's of church administration, personal ministries of the pastor and the pastor's wife and WMU.

R. T. Blackstock, director of Christian social ministries from the Jacksonville Baptist Association in Florida, told a group of conferees that ministry is reaching outside the church into the community.

"The personal needs of human beings become the unique opportunity for Christians," Blackstock said. "However, sometimes it is difficult for ministry in the small church because of several things: short terms of the pastors, rapid turnover of people, part-time pastors, or just a simply smallness syndrome."

But there are advantages for ministry in the small church, Blackstock said. "There can be a genuine fellowship among small groups that can't be developed in the larger church, and the church was first of all a fellowship before it was an institution."

Most churches perform two types of ministry, he said--a "reaction" ministry, which takes place in a crisis situation and the "planned-seeking-out" opportunities. Most reaction ministries are short-term projects like taking Christmas baskets, or helping when a house burns.

"However the more effective kind of ministry is the planned, or long-on-going program, such as a jail ministry or work with drug abuse," Blackstock said. "They get long and tiresome, but they are the most effective for our day."

For too long Southern Baptists' whole approach to ministry has been a numbers program, said Dewey Hodge, pastor of First Baptist Church, Marion, N.C.

"How much time in your last deacons' meeting did you speak about peoples' hurts? We have let too many conservative people scare our pastors out of social ministry. But it's the only kind of ministry Jesus had," Hodge said.

Many of the pastors were young, 30 to 40, and most serve churches with about 125 members.

The youngest pastor attending the conference was Jimmy McKinney, 17-year-old pastor of Line Creek Baptist Church, Broadhead, Ky.

The church, situated in the middle of 1,000 acres of timberland and by two other Baptist churches, was without a pastor for five years before McKinney, who attends high school in Sommerset 16 miles away, became pastor.

For McKinney, like many of the pastors, only 30 to 40 prospects live within a six mile radius of the church.

"But I feel like the people really need a church at Line Creek," he said. "The potential is there. If the people will realize that they should witness to their neighbors the church will grow."

North Carolina pastor De Forrest Hillyer Jr., was encouraged by the fellowship.

"It is uplifting to know that other pastors have some of the same problems I do. Also I was impressed with the honest interest of our Southern Baptist leadership concerning the small church," he said.

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Evaluation, Study, Done
By Mideast Missionaries

4/2/73

NICOSIA, Cyprus (BP)--Increasing financial pressures brought about by dollar devaluation and spiraling costs have forced institutionally-oriented missions in the Middle East to consider alternate projects, reported Baptist representatives meeting here.

Representatives from seven missions (organizations of Southern Baptist missionaries) in the Middle East met for an intensive, critical analysis of Baptist work in the area.

Missionaries said the dollar squeeze has forced them to curtail local staffing to a dangerously low level and even to consider phasing out some institutions.

The group reported that their organizations, with the exception of those in India and Bangladesh, prefer an increase in finances for existing work over an increase in new missionaries if both are not available.

The missionaries also said they "strongly recommend that select missionaries be permitted to work in government institutions where broader segments of the host population can be contacted

Other conclusions and observations reached were:

1. Baptist mission work would profit from both individual and unified strategy of mission, particularly to Islam.
2. While recognizing the value of missionary "presence," positive steps toward witness and service ought to be taken wherever possible.
3. The development and training of national leadership must be given top priority in the immediate future.

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They also asked that a special study be done on effective evangelical confrontation with Islam, and that an improved orientation program be set up for new missionary personnel which would include language, culture, anthropology and religions--mainly Hindu and Islam.

"The conference provided the first opportunity for Middle East missions to conceive of themselves as a 'team-in-mission' rather than isolated groups at work in individual countries," said William W. Marshall, Southern Baptist missionary field representative for the Middle East who planned and led the conference.

The conference process was a 14-hour-per-day immersion with an interchange of critiques. Over 80 per cent of the missionaries from the area had submitted for oral reading more than 120 individual missionary critiques as well as separate critiques of all projects and institutions.

Bombs rocked the city late one night, a reminder that the political instability of the entire Middle East touches even the non-semitic countries.

Though continuing and perhaps increasing hostility will prevail in many host countries, there was present a realistic optimism, Marshall said, that some kind of spiritual breakthrough in the Middle East is imminent.

Southern Baptists, relative newcomers to the area, represent the largest evangelical presence there, excluding India and Bangladesh. In Yemen and Gaza, Baptists are the only American evangelicals present.

John D. Hughey, SBC Foreign Mission Board secretary for Europe and the Middle East, commenting on the success of the strategy conference in Cyprus, said: "It was one of the best things that has happened in the Middle East. I agree that we have never had such good source materials for consideration of strategy or such practical, down-to-earth discussions of our work in the area."

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Baptist PR Group Elects Pattillo, Presents Awards

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The Baptist Public Relations Association meeting here named as its president-elect Wesley M. (Pat) Pattillo, who later in the meeting won the largest number of awards in the association's annual awards competition.

Pattillo, vice president of development for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, was named to succeed Clarence E. Duncan, administrative assistant at the Southern Baptist Radio-Television in Fort Worth, who assumed the presidency of the public relations association after the New Orleans meeting.

In addition to election of officers, the association passed a resolution advocating freedom of the press, noting a trend in society toward limiting the freedom of news media to protect confidential sources and seeking to intimidate the press on handling of controversy.

The resolution urged Baptists to work for freedom of the press with the same vigor they work for freedom of religion, both of which are guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

In the annual awards competition the day following the election of officers, Pattillo won seven awards, including two first place citations, for his work in letterhead design, feature series, newsletter, advertising, development project, and general information literature.

Though Pattillo won the largest number of individual awards, staff members of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta won more awards than any other agency or institution, with 13 awards.

Walker, L. Knight, editor of Home Missions magazine, won the Douglas Tomlinson Award for "significant achievement in religious journalism" including a plaque and \$50 in cash, for the magazine's issues covering missions work in Alaska and Hawaii.

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Five other cash awards were presented, including the \$50 M. E. Dodd Memorial Award for "significant achievement in television" to Chris Hansen of Baylor University, Waco, Tex.; and the Arthur S. Davenport Award to Duncan for the Radio-TV Commission's 1972 Abe Lincoln Awards Program. Duncan is new president of the association.

Bill Junker of National Student Ministries for the SBC Sunday School Board won the top award for the total publications program; Marjorie Saunders of Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas received the top prize for the hospital's total public relations program; and Eugene W. Baker of Union University won the top award for the school's total development program. Each received \$50 and a plaque.

Dominating the photography category, two Home Mission Board photographers, Don Rutledge and Knolan Benfield, each won four photography awards. Knight won three writing and magazine awards, and Jay Durham won two awards for filmstrip production. Together, they won 13 awards for the Home Mission Board.

Junker, Jennifer Bryon and Eva Baker Giles of the Sunday School Board's Book Store Division teamed to win for the board the second highest number of awards going to any one agency. Junker won three awards, Mrs. Giles, three; and Miss Bryon, two, for a total of eight awards won by Sunday School Board staff members.

Staff members of the SBC Foreign Mission Board and Baptist General Convention of Texas each won five awards for their agencies.

For the Foreign Mission Board, Rick Styles won two awards, and one each went to Jesse Fletcher, Norman Price, and Fon Scofield.

For the Texas Convention, Robert O'Brien won two awards for writing and David Clanton won three awards for photography.

There were more than 400 entries in the awards competition this year, exceeding last year's record number of entries by nearly 100, said Mrs. Catherine Allen of Birmingham, public relations consultant for Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union who served as awards chairman.

A panel of independent judges, all professionals in their field, selected the winning entries in 26 categories, plus the three special memorial awards.

Unlike some previous years, Mrs. Allen pointed out, the awards went to a wide range of individuals and agencies, with no one person or agency dominating the winning circle. About 38 individuals from 25 Baptist organizations won awards.

An "award of exceptional merit" was presented to the top entry in each category, with an "award of merit" going to the second ranked entry.

The top awards in the individual categories went to: Styles of the Foreign Mission Board for the best annual report; Don Hepburn of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for the best catalogue; W. W. Warmath of Union University for the top development brochure; Price of the Foreign Mission Board for the best general information literature; Junker of National Student Ministries for the top magazine;

Duncan of the Radio-TV Commission for the best newsletter; Fletcher of the Foreign Mission Board for the best poster; Janie Lott of Birmingham Baptist Medical Centers for the top special event publication; Pattillo for the best letterhead; Phil Royce of Chowan College for the top radio production; Mrs. Giles of the Sunday School Board for the best television commercial;

Pattillo for the best feature series; Jim Newton of Baptist Press for the top feature article; Hepburn of Southwestern Seminary for the best news story; O'Brien of the Texas convention for the top news series; John Carter of Dallas Baptist College for the highest ranking motion picture film.

In six different photography categories, Benfield won first in single news photography, and single feature photography; Rutledge won first place honors in the news photo series; and Junker won first single in publications photo for a cover photograph.

Other first place winners were Durham for filmstrip production; Floyd A. Craig of the SBC Christian Life Commission, single advertisement; Styles of the Foreign Mission Board for an advertising series; and Mrs. Giles for a direct mail project.

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Bible Conference Has
Record Attendance

4/2/73

MEMPHIS (BP)--More than 4,000 persons from 22 states gathered recently in Memphis to attend the Mid-America Bible Conference at Bellevue Baptist Church.

It was one of the largest groups ever to attend a Bible conference sponsored by the Sunday School department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

A.V. Washburn, secretary of the board's Sunday school department said the conference "was in many respects the most successful of any held thus far. The enthusiastic response of the people is eloquent testimony to the wide-spread hunger for purposeful Bible study."

The program included four evening messages on "the spirit filled life" to adults and youth respectively by Jack R. Taylor, pastor of Castle Hills Baptist Church, San Antonio, and James B. Henry, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville.

Taylor, author of the books *The Key to Triumphant Living* and *Much More*, told the crowd that anyone can be "filled with the Holy Spirit of God. This is not for an elite few. It will begin in your city, state and home only when it begins in you," he said.

"The abundant life--that's what we call it," Henry told the 600 youth attending the conference. "The Holy Spirit brings out the potential and power for you to live victoriously in your kind of world," Henry said.

Selected choirs presented special music for worship services each night during the conference.

One highlight of the conference came when a 90-voice choir from First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La., brought the special music preceding Taylor's sermon.

After the message the choir was scheduled to give a 20-minute concert for anyone desiring to remain. Nearly 1,000 people stayed for the concert and would not allow the choir to stop singing until after 10:00 p.m., following a 45-minute performance.

"More About Jesus," one of the selections featuring Bob McConnell, director of the choir, as soloist, was sung three times upon demand of the audience.

Choir and congregation closed the service in unison after the concert by singing "Sweet, Sweet Spirit," and reciting the Lord's Prayer as the benediction.

Seventeen individual conferences were offered to participants, taught by pastors, seminary professors, church staff members and Sunday School Board personnel.

Response to the conference was excellent, according to Washburn. One pastor called it "the most rewarding venture of my life," and said he could not compare the experience to any previous one. "For more than 15 years I have attended conferences, seminars, and conventions, but this has been the greatest," the pastor told Washburn.

Clarence Heneisen, music director from Frazier Baptist Church spoke with excitement about the conference. "Already you can see the effect," he said, "you can feel the Holy Spirit working in the services."

"Bible conferences such as this one are a vital part of the Bible teaching program and will continue to be strongly promoted by the Sunday School department," Washburn concluded. "I am confident that this will help churches carry out their mission more fully."

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