

(BP)---FEATURES

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Sometimes It's Hard to Be
A Baptist 'by the Book'

By A. Clark Scanlon
for Baptist Press

The veteran missionary likes to think he can roll with the punches--that he's ready for just about anything.

But occasionally he is just not prepared for what comes up. Some days not only try his stamina, but make him re-evaluate his dedication to New Testament principles.

Take a recent Sunday for example. The whole episode began in a very simple manner that gave little indication of the rush of events to follow.

Our small church in Guatemala City has no baptistry, and foregoing its usual practice of baptizing (by immersion) in a lake, asked a nearby sister church for the use of its baptistry on Sunday afternoon.

As we arrived at the church a few minutes before the service, we began to feel a vague uneasiness when we saw three young men to be baptized were out walking in the street.

They bounced quickly over to the car with the news, "Someone forgot to fill the baptistry, and it won't be ready until five o'clock."

I groaned, and Sarah, my wife, began to recount that she had a choir practice at 5:30 p.m. I had a revival service to preach that night and besides that, what in the world were we going to do with a congregation for the next two hours.

Inside, I found that my enterprising missionary colleague, Chester Cadwallader, had gone to ask the fire department to fill the baptistry.

The fire department is the one institution in Guatemala City the absence of which would bring life to a complete standstill. The firemen are the first on the scene of a wreck, a murder or a drowning.

Naturally, the church turned to the firemen.

Graciously, the firemen agreed to help but calculated it would take an hour for them to fill their 500 gallon tank and bring it to the church.

In the meantime, we checked the water in the baptistry. It stood at exactly three inches. I knew at that moment where the deviation from the biblical practice of total immersion began. Sometimes it's hard to be a Baptist.

But never mind, the "bomberos" (firemen) were on their way. We began a marathon baptismal service. The congregation sang enough songs to have created a mini-festival of Christian music. We read enough scripture to put us ahead on daily Bible readings for months to come. I gave enough instruction on baptism to have provided credit for a seminary course in ecclesiology.

But when all this ended, the firemen still had not appeared. Perhaps their absence had to do with a heavy column of black smoke that rose off in the distant edge of the neighborhood.

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Again, Cadwallader rose to the occasion by going to a nearby cemetery and borrowing the buckets they use to water flowers. With buckets in hand, the men, boys and baptismal candidates formed brigades like old time fire fighters, and slowly the baptistry began to fill while the waiting congregation continued to sing.

Friendly neighbors opened doors, and water came from every doorway until the baptistry reached a respectable level. As the people reverently watched, two teachers, a house painter, an Indian woman and several students--10 in all--followed their Lord in baptism. (BP)

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A. Clark Scanlon is a field representative to Middle America for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Daughter of Missionaries
Foins Pickpocket Attempt

4/30/74

QUITO, Ecuador (BP)--Pickpockets beware. Debbie Marble, the 11-year-old daughter of Southern Baptist missionary associates Mr. and Mrs. Elmo R. Marble, can hold her own in this country where her parents have lived for only two-and-a-half years.

Recently when Mr. and Mrs. John L. Slaughter of Anderson, S.C., visited South America, Mrs. Marble, Debbie and the Marbles' other daughter Ruthie showed them around Quito.

They were on a bus when Debbie noticed a man slip his fingers in Slaughter's pocket and gently lift his wallet. She immediately knocked the pickpocket's hand as hard as she could. The wallet went tumbling to the floor.

An accomplice attempted to recover it, but quick-thinking Debbie stepped on his hand. A lady sitting nearby retrieved the wallet and handed it to Mrs. Slaughter. According to her father, Debbie was reprimanding the pickpocket in Spanish during the entire incident.

As the bus stopped, Debbie told the bus driver to hold up the bus until the Slaughters could collect their things. When the Slaughters were sure they had all their belongings, Debbie thanked the driver and the group continued their tour.

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Bus Transportation Plans
Set for SBC Messengers

4/30/74

DALLAS (BP)--The Dallas Transit System will provide regular bus service between the Convention Center and motels and hotels during the Southern Baptist Convention, June 11-13.

"The buses will go out as far from downtown as the housing bureau have booked large numbers," said transportation chairman George Heath, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in suburban DeSoto.

Fifty cents will be charged for all riders. Only exact change will be accepted.

"The routes begin Tuesday morning at 8 a.m. and continue to run from 8-10 each morning and from 4 p.m. to the end of the night sessions," explained Heath.

Except on Wednesday, he continued, when there is no afternoon session, the buses will run from the Convention Center to the hotels at noon.

"Because of the parking situation in the Convention Center area in downtown Dallas during the day, we want to encourage as many as possible to leave their cars at the hotels and take advantage of the bus service," said Heath.

Taxicabs also will be available at the Convention Center.

We are assured, Heath added, that the Surtran Bus Service from the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport can adequately transport those flying to the convention.

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April 30, 1974

Court Rules Segregation Bars Private School Aid

By Stan L. Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court refused without comment to review a Louisiana case dealing with state aid to students attending a segregated private school.

The case, *Evangeline Parish School Board v. U.S.*, involved what the school board described as "minimal state aid" to students in nonpublic schools. At stake were free transportation, textbooks and school supplies for students enrolled in *Evangeline Academy*, a Catholic parochial school.

A U.S. district court ruled in July 1972 that the school board was complying with Louisiana statutes in providing such aid and thus rejected the argument of the U.S. government that any school, public or nonpublic, practicing racial discrimination should be denied any public subsidy.

On appeal, the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the lower court's decision, holding that the government's case against the academy on charges of racial discrimination was valid.

By refusing to schedule the case for oral argument, the Supreme Court indicated neither approval nor disapproval of the lower court's decision. The practical effect, nevertheless, is that the ruling on behalf of the government in the court of appeals stands.

The school board argued that *Evangeline Academy* itself was being discriminated against in the government's suit. The school was founded in 1969 when another Catholic school in the parish (county), *Sacred Heart Academy*, could no longer accommodate the number of applicants for admission.

Sacred Heart was desegregated during the 1970-71 school year when one black student enrolled. Since then, the school board pointed out, no other blacks have entered *Sacred Heart* and no black teachers have been employed.

Evangeline Academy, meanwhile, has remained all-white since its inception in 1969, although the school board argued that the school's admissions policy is non-discriminatory. The reason that the school remains all-white, the argument continued, is that no black students have applied for admission.

The heart of the government's argument was that parents were purposely withdrawing their children from the parish's public schools and enrolling them at *Evangeline Academy* to escape the newly-desegregated public schools.

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Prime Minister Pindling
Hails Bahamian Baptists

4/30/74

NASSAU, Bahamas (BP)--The prime minister of the Bahamas, the honorable L. O. Pindling, told messengers to the Bahamas Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention meeting here that the nation has benefited and prospered due to the involvement of Baptist people.

R. E. Cooper, pastor of Mission Baptist Church for more than 30 years, was reelected president of the convention which "seemed to be gathering steam for a forward thrust which could have a significant impact on the religious and national life of the country for years to come," according to Antonina Canzoneri, missionary press representative.

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Although this was its 38th annual session, it was only the third session since the convention was enlarged to include the majority of Baptist churches in the Bahamas, about 200 of more than 250.

Miss Canzoneri said that for the first time the spirit seemed to be, "We are totally committed to this--now let's go." A highlight of the meeting came on youth night when 17 young people gave themselves for full-time Christian service.

The 300-400 attending the sessions heard goals and progress reports. During the past year a convention-wide Baptist young people's fellowship was formed, The Baptist Hour program was used weekly on national radio stations, Witness Involvement Now personal evangelism schools were held on seven islands and 56 vacation Bible schools enrolled 4,040 children, with 312 making professions of faith in Christ.

For the first time this year, Bahamians will conduct the schools totally, without help from United States students. Four large revival tent meetings are planned and the united Baptist choir will sing at the Southern Baptist Convention and Woman's Missionary Union Convention in Dallas, Tex., in June.

Another highlight of the meeting was a reception given by the governor-general of the Bahamas for 400 Baptist leaders and church members.

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