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Evangelist Bill Glass
Conducts Prison Crusades

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By Charles R. Richardson
for Baptist Press

Prison walls and convicts have become rather commonplace to Bill Glass of Dallas, former Cleveland Browns' defensive end and one-time All-America player at Baylor University.

Today, instead of helping teammates win contests against grid opponents, Glass is exercising his faith in Jesus Christ by sharing the "good news" of the Bible among some of the nation's toughies behind bars.

Since the summer of 1972, Glass, who retired five years ago from professional football ranks, has conducted eight three-day "prison crusades" over the U.S. He has plans for others in addition to his city-wide efforts.

In eight prisons in six states (Texas, California, Wisconsin, Ohio, New Mexico, and Kentucky), more than 1,000 inmates, guards, psychologists and even two wardens have had life-changing experiences of Christ.

After Glass and his group leave a prison, counselors in the area continue Bible study for at least seven weeks and sometimes longer.

"We have a good advance and good follow-up," Glass said.

They usually enter the prison on a Friday morning and end the crusade on Sunday. Careful publicity is distributed before the team arrives so the prison community will know about the program.

Counselors mingle with the prisoners and in instances visit them in solitary confinement.

What impresses the convicts, Glass says, is that people from outside of the prison walls care enough to come at their own expense.

One of the popular attractions of the crusade is the athletic clinic which usually begins at 9 a.m. on Saturdays and continues throughout the day.

"We always go to a football field or a recreation area. There are lots of people, including convicts, who will go to a football field who won't go to a church or chapel," said the former All-Pro performer.

Throughout the day, many of the sports personalities speak briefly and then Glass speaks briefly during the evening.

"I tell them something like this," Glass said. "Our objective is not to keep you out of trouble. Our objective is to give you something worthwhile to do with your life. Get you some real objectives."

Then, following the brief message, Glass said he tells the convicts that there are counselors among them. If they wish to talk about their relationship to Christ, "hang around" and talk with one of the counselors. Many do, he explained.

"Our objective is not to be self righteous, but to show them they can be forgiven. That's really the meaning we have in the message."

Glass' counselors come from many different backgrounds and most are attracted to the prison crusades after working the the evangelist's citywide meetings.

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"These people really know what they are doing. We have to select the best of our citywide counselors," said Glass.

Team members have included many outstanding sports figures as well as others with strong Christian commitments.

One of the biggest men literally is Paul Anderson, the 375-pounder, who is billed as "the world's strongest man."

Several of Glass' former National Football League teammates and opponents support him in the efforts. Treasurer of his association is J.R. Smith, a former All-Pro guard for Cleveland and the Dallas Cowboys, and another key board member is Raymond Berry, who was a Baltimore Colt All-Pro receiver.

Figures for the sports clinics and demonstrations have been led by former Milwaukee basketball player McCoy McLemore, former New York relief pitcher Steve Hamilton and Dallas Cowboy griddler John Niland, another All-Pro.

Two of the counselors at the Eddyville, Ky., prison included FBI Agent Dave Templeton of Madison, Wis., and 81-year-old George Joslin of Indianapolis.

What Glass hopes to accomplish during his prison engagements is mirrored by the comment of one prisoner who found new life in Christ.

"Now, I'm free," he said, "With Jesus Christ, I'm freer than those guards who go home at night." (BP)

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers this week.

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Black Baptists Asked
To Help SBC Win World

9/12/74

By Baptist Press

Southern Baptist Convention President Jaroy Weber extended expressions of cooperation to two black Baptist bodies meeting in annual session and challenged them to work with the SBC to try to "win America to Christ."

Addressing the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., meeting in Buffalo, N.Y., and the Progressive National Baptist Convention, meeting in Cleveland, Weber offered "the hand of Southern Baptists to you to join in a spirit of cooperation to accomplish the purpose of God. Our objective is the same, that is, to win the world to Christ and make disciples out of all who have been won."

Meeting simultaneously in Nashville, Tenn., was a third black Baptist group, the National Baptist Convention of America.

Weber, pastor of First Baptist Church, Lubbock, Tex., told the black Baptists he believes that they could be more effective in reaching certain cultures than Southern Baptists in some parts of the world.

The SBC president expressed the opinion that the Baptists groups could learn from each other. "With an open Bible and an open mind we stand ready to learn from you and others who are committed to evangelizing the world.

"I personally believe that the election of our vice president, Charles King, will help us to achieve some of your glorious spirit of joy and happiness," Weber told the groups. King, elected second vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas this year, was the first black person to be elected a Southern Baptist Convention office.

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"I've come to challenge you to join us in trying to win America to Christ... This burden should commit us to a new priority which would give us an opportunity to see God's work in an unusual way in the area of evangelism," he said.

In its 94th annual session, the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., the second largest Baptist group in the world, after Southern Baptists, re-elected Joseph H. Jackson, pastor of Olivet Baptist Church, Chicago, to his 22nd term as president. Over 20,000 persons attended the Buffalo convention.

Jackson told the group, which has 6.3 million membership and 30,000 churches, that "Negro Americans should reject the 'cult of revenge' in which people think, plan and work to get revenge on those who were once oppressors of the weak.

"We should not allow ourselves to be used by those who are members of movements to divide, weaken and destroy our democracy. We must reject members of our race who advocate a return to segregation and discrimination and have taken a stand against integration.

"I believe America cannot exist half segregated and half integrated."

Some 4,000 persons attended the 13th annual session of the Progressive National Convention, which has 600,000 members.

Featured speaker at the convention was Jesse L. Jackson of Chicago, founder of People United to Save Humanity (PUSH).

The 32-year-old minister stressed that the church should be the organization through which social change occurs for blacks.

He claimed that the black church is the most stable organization to administer many programs funded by the federal government, and that it should play a key role in administering the food stamp program, should provide direction on how to spend revenue sharing funds and should be the prime administrator of money to build housing for the poor.

In Nashville, the National Baptist Convention of America re-elected James Carl Sams of Jacksonville, Fla., as president for an eighth term.

W.A. Jones, a pastor and professor from Brooklyn, in the pre-convention pastor's conference, said, "Racism would come to a screeching halt and war and poverty would cease if enough of us (black preachers) had the courage to preach the gospel."

Delivering his punch line, Jones said, "The American nation has gone through serious times since it has come from the time that George Washington could not tell a lie to the time when Richard Nixon could not tell the truth."

Sams, in his presidential address, said of America's racial problems, "Black is not more beautiful than brown or white. If you buy a car you don't sweat over the color, you raise the hood to see if a motor is there and if it is working and if it is working you can ride.

"Likewise, if you have education, intelligence and a pure heart you can ride over prejudice, evil and jealousy."

But Sams, reports W.A. Reed, religion news editor of the Nashville Tennessean, "either startled or delighted local fundamentalists of the Nashville Bible Belt area when he assured his audience they were the sons of the Biblical Ham.

"He said: 'Noah had three sons and was a missionary Baptist preacher. His sons were Japeth, a Caucasian; Ham, a Negro; and Shem, a Jew, and we have come to Nashville from Noah's Ark.'

"A few moments later," Reed continued, "with no mention of Red or Brown or Yellow men, Sams said man was created from dust and 'God breathed into the dust.'"

Mrs. R.L. Mathis, president of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, was among speakers at the convention, attended by some 10,000 black Baptists. (BP)

Wrapup

Christian Life Commission
Emphasizes Applied Christianity

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission bestowed its 1974 Distinguished Service Award and heard a prominent churchman analyze practical application of the Christian faith at the commission's annual meeting here.

The commission also approved a record budget of \$300,000, elected a new slate of officers and mapped plans for the future.

Lloyd Crawford, a layman from Golden, Colo., succeeds Cecil Sherman, a pastor from Asheville, N.C., as chairman. Sarah Frances Anders, head of the sociology department at Louisiana College, a Baptist school in Pineville, was named vice chairperson. William M. Pinson Jr., professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is the secretary.

W. Randall Lolley, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., received the Distinguished Service Award which cited for "unique contributions to Southern Baptists in the area of applied Christianity."

Martin E. Marty, in an address to the commission, discussed the "binocular vision" that Christians must have to view not only the eternal but "to see human need...to see God revealed in the face of human pain.

"Jesus Christ can be found in the middle of everything--but the road," declared Marty, associate editor of Christian Century and professor of modern church history at the University of Chicago's Divinity School.

"Not to take a stand is to take a stand," he said, "especially in the welter of controversial issues we face in the world. People know your faith by where you stand," he said, adding that three-fourths of the Christians were silent in Hitler's Germany, thereby casting their votes for evil.

The Lutheran clergyman said that often Christians, when in doubt, stick with the status quo. "The demonic pervades the structures of existence," he warned.

He also urged that Christians look for new strategies and not just decide that something doesn't work if it doesn't work as it did in the 1950s.

Marty suggested that churches "unleash the power" of the laity and that they attempt to minister in crises before the issues are polarized--when opinions on issues are diffuse.

Delivering a report on the state of the Christian Life Commission Foy Valentine, executive secretary-treasurer, outlined critical financial concerns which, he said, have caused the commission budget "to stand still as far as real budget has been concerned" over the past five years.

He said the critical financial concerns "made us face up to the fact of life and have served to remind us that about 90 per cent of the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program goes to agencies that are working diligently and consistently to raise money outside the Cooperative Program.

"One of our goals," he said, "is to achieve the best possible internal organization so as to give Southern Baptists full value for the substantial funds the convention now invests in the Christian Life Commission" through the Cooperative Program, "the SBC's financial lifeline."

Valentine noted that defeat of the Christian Life Commission's proposals on freedom of women at the SBC in Dallas last June "has issued a wave of support stronger than we have felt in a number of years.

"Attacks on the Commission, largely though not solely by outsiders, have consumed a good deal of time and energy; but there is a divine alchemy working even in these attacks as we are reminded: 'Woe unto you when all men speak well of you.'"

Citing the moral, family, political, racial and economic crises in society, Valentine noted that the need for the Christian Life Commission's emphasis on Christian morality development is "needed more than ever before."

The question of race, for example, Valentine said, "The racial crisis has not gone away. On the contrary, it is building up a head of steam. A stifled desperation hangs in the air and the dream of Martin Luther King, like the vision of Isaiah, goes unfulfilled while in the distance... there is a sound of knives being sharpened."

He said moral emphases are urgent in a time faced by the "crumbling of the pillars of state. The approaching Bicentennial celebration should afford us the opportunity of the century to expand this emphasis."

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Labor Leader Hails Law
Aiding Hospital Workers

9/12/74

WASHINGTON (BP)--A top labor union official said here that a new public law which grants union rights to employees of nonprofit hospitals should result in better working conditions and a reduction in the turnover rate at such institutions.

Thomas R. Donahue, executive assistant to George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, said in a radio interview that since 1947, when workers in nonprofit hospitals were dropped from National Labor Relations Act Coverage, pay and other working conditions in the industry have slipped so badly that a great many of those workers are forced to seek food stamps and other public aid while working at full-time jobs.

The present session of Congress approved a bill designed to extend the right to strike and other negotiating rights to nonprofit hospital employees. The measure became public law 93-360 on July 26. It affects all hospitals operated by religious organizations.

Besides the right-to-strike provision, the new law also calls for additional mediation and conciliation procedures for labor-management disputes in nonprofit hospitals. Among these provisions are mandatory mediation, a 10-day notice of intent to strike or picket and appointment of a board of inquiry charged with working out a settlement during a cooling-off period.

The law provides also for exemption from union agreements for those employees of health care institutions who have religious convictions against joining a union.

Donahue said that the 27-year struggle to regain union benefits for nonprofit hospital workers demonstrates "why labor must be politically active... how small things happen in the Congress that (adversely) affect millions of people."

Donahue denied that the new law would trigger even higher hospital rates. Although he acknowledged that while wages constitute "about 52 per cent of the total cost of operation," many other factors should be blamed for skyrocketing hospital charges, primarily an "outmoded health care delivery system."

The AFL-CIO leader added that one of the most important advantages of the new law will be on "the attitude of the worker himself and his ability to do a job in which he finds fulfillment," without being forced to turn to "welfare sources."

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