



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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75-23

Presidents Vote 'Hub' Role For Seminary Extension Dept.

NASHVILLE (BP)--Presidents of the six Southern Baptist Convention-owned theological seminaries have voted to make the SBC's Seminary Extension Department the "hub" of information on all educational programs the seminaries are providing for pastors without seminary training.

"That action represents a significant step forward in the efforts of Southern Baptists to upgrade educational background of ministers and reaffirms the seminary presidents' long-time commitment to provide training for all ministers regardless of previous academic experience," said Raymond M. Rigdon, Seminary Extension Department director.

Seminary Extension, which currently offers some 50 courses for home and extension center study, will become a clearing house to communicate information about non-degree, diploma type work offered by the six seminaries and by the Seminary Extension Department.

Also, Rigdon said, the department will put renewed emphasis on conducting "selective cultivation" of individuals and groups of pastors and others who are prospects for seminary diploma programs or study with Seminary Extension.

Basis for the selective cultivation, Rigdon said, is a recent study done by the SBC Education Commission and SBC Home Mission Board on the educational attainment of Southern Baptist pastors, which revealed, among other data, that 53 percent of Southern Baptist pastors do not have seminary training.

"It is one of the most careful studies on the educational background of pastors ever conducted among Southern Baptists," Rigdon said, "and, although it doesn't give names of individuals, it shows where clusters of non-seminary-trained pastors are located and what their level of training is."

He said the department, through a special information and consultation service, will re-emphasize efforts to provide information about how to enroll in adult basic education programs, earn high school equivalency, secure a limited amount of college credits through Seminary Extension college-level courses or through College Level Entrance Placement (CLEP) examinations, combine Seminary Extension credits with seminary diploma programs and design a continuing education program using seminary Extension and other resources

The department, he said, also encourages persons who can do so to complete degree programs in college and/or seminary.

Seminary Extension Department courses, he added, are designed at three levels--basic non-diploma, college-level and continuing education--which can reach persons ranging from an elementary school background to a Ph.D. and "encourage continuing educational growth that does not stop with a diploma or degree but continues throughout life."

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Race Reconciliation Lead
Belongs to Whites, Says Black

Baptist Press
2/11/75

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--"If whites don't take the initiative in reconciliation of the races, we will worship at a broken altar and revival will not come," a black Baptist preacher told some two-thirds of Alabama's white Baptist preachers here.

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NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

E. V. Hill, pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Los Angeles, was one of a battery of speakers at the annual evangelism conference of Alabama Southern Baptists dealing with the dynamics of revival.

Offering his prescription for revival, Hill said, "Revival tends to release all the brakes we have on. It also destroys hidden prejudices and gives power to perform that which we want to do but cannot do within ourselves.

"God refuses to send power where there is no action," Hill continued, challenging preachers to "get into some trouble" if they want to see the power of God manifest in their lives.

Remarking that there are too many comfortable preachers, Hill warned that when the preacher really gets down to business he will encounter trouble. Hill said he knows this from experience, since he has had to be protected from both the Ku Klux Klan and the Black Panthers.

After becoming dissatisfied with the status quo, Hill said, the second ingredient a preacher must have to spark revival is a properly prepared altar.

"In Alabama, you won't get to first base until there is reconciliation among preachers of all colors," he said.

"Southern Baptists must now take the initiative, because for 50 years the black preachers knocked on your doors asking for help. But 10 years ago they turned back and stopped knocking and don't plan to knock anymore," he declared.

The third ingredient, he said, is prayer. "The fire will fall when preachers declare with authority that it's time for church services, get the altar repaired and pray," Hill said. He received a standing ovation.

Addressing himself to how to save the beleaguered cities, Hill outlined to some 3,000 listeners a program of evangelism and human improvement he developed at his church in the Watts section of Los Angeles.

Hill's plan calls for 3,100 block workers--trained to witness for their faith and trained to teach others to do so--which he calls "God's secret army."

"We have become convinced that we can't do anything," Hill exclaimed, as he urged preachers to work out such a plan in their own areas. "We have become keepers of aquariums rather than fishers of men."

He cautioned that churches in America had better turn more attention to minorities and the inner cities, saying the nation will go the way of the cities.

"Minorities have already taken over the inner cities around the country, and I am concerned about the religious faith or lack of it among these people"--who are already electing mayors and city officials in some cities, he said.

In an interview later, Hill said his church emphasizes conversion but follows up with church-sponsored credit unions and food and clothing banks for members. The congregation has built more than \$3.5 million in housing for the elderly and operates a job placement service for minorities.

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Criswell Slated For SBC
Ministers' Wives Conference

Baptist Press
2/11/75

MIAMI BEACH (BP)--W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, will speak here at the Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives Conference at 12:30 p.m., June 10, at Central Baptist Church.

The conference, which meets in conjunction with the annual sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention, will be built around the theme, "Gateway to the World" and will center on "The Woman--in the Word, Into the World."

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Mrs. Jim Hughens, 5340 S. W. 83th Ct., Miami, Fla. 33165, is in charge of advance registration. Tickets may be paid for, at \$4.50 each, at the registration desk, not in advance. They will be sold on Monday and Tuesday mornings, June 9 and 10, according to Mrs. Maurice Clayton, president of the Ministers' Wives Conference.

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Texas PR Group Urges
Rededication; Hunger Action

Baptist Press
2/11/75

SAN MARCOS, Tex. (BP)--The Texas Baptist Public Relations Association (TBPRA), in resolutions adopted here, urged action to alleviate the world hunger crisis and called for rededication to the principles which have made America great.

The association of public relations practitioners in Texas Baptist institutions, agencies and churches, in its annual meeting, deplored "diversion of millions of bushels of grain into the manufacture of alcoholic beverages." It also asked members to forego at least one meal a week and donate its cost through the Baptist General Convention of Texas, which has a fund set up for world hunger needs.

Taking note of the upcoming bicentennial observance, a resolution declared the "need for commitment to the teachings and principles of the Old and New Testaments (of the Bible) is greater than ever before in a time of moral deterioration, economic disarray and political malfeasance."

It called on citizens to recognize their religious heritage and urged them to rededicate themselves to the principles which have made this nation great."

Believers in Jesus Christ, the resolution said, should "conduct themselves in private life, their business and profession, social activities and political undertakings in such a manner as would reflect honor to the name of Christ and promote good citizenship."

Theo Sommerkamp of the Southern Baptist Convention's Annuity Board, Dallas, was named president-elect of TBPRA. Jim Hughes of Dallas of the TimeRite division of the SBC Radio and Television Commission, Bob Johnston of San Marcos Baptist Academy and David A. Risinger of the Texas Baptist public relations staff were named to vice presidential posts. Marjorie Saunders of Baylor University Medical Center, Dallas, was elected secretary-treasurer. Orville Scott, Texas Baptist public relations director, is president.

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Texas Baptists Record
\$2 Million Month

Baptist Press
2/11/75

DALLAS (BP)--For the first time in history, Texas Baptists recorded a \$2-million giving month through the state's Cooperative Program unified budget in January.

In the first month of 1975, the churches and missions of the Baptist General Convention of Texas gave \$2,187,593 to the Cooperative Program for use in state, national and worldwide causes.

The January total is \$520,926, above the budget and compares with \$1,994,221 given in January a year ago.

In noting the achievement, James H. Landes, Texas Baptist executive secretary, said, "Since we have achieved the first \$2 million month in our history, I feel this provides the impetus for our reaching our 1975 budget goal of \$20,608,000."

The \$20.6 million goal commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program.

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Speaker 'Lost' But Found
In Time For Bible Study

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM (BP)--Morgan Brian, an attorney from New Orleans, was not in Brussels as a tourist or a businessman. He was on a mission. But a case of mistaken identity nearly made him a businessman instead of a Bible study leader.

Brian, who came to lead the January Bible study at Brussels' International Baptist Church, was to be met at the airport by the church's pastor, Southern Baptist Missionary Charles P. Long. The two had never met.

Brian moved about the airport lobby in expectation. A man approached, obviously looking for someone. Thinking this must be his host, Brian asked, "Are you Charles Long?"

At that instant, there was some loud noise in the building. The only response he could note was a warm smile and a handshake. While making small conversation, bags were placed in the car and the two men set off.

Some minutes into the city, Brian chanced to remark that it was raining in New Orleans. The man asked if he had been to New Orleans lately. With a sudden uneasiness, Brian explained who he was.

The error discovered, the two returned to the airport and traded persons, as a distraught business executive finally found his contact man and a slightly puzzled pastor recovered his guest speaker.



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