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**Preventive Measures Will
Deter Pastoral Dropouts**

By Mike Chute

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--With 1,000 Southern Baptist pastors dropping out of the ministry each year, the denomination and its pastors can take preventive measures to halt this problem, according to Bob Dale, pastoral ministries consultant at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Knowing that dropouts tend to leave the ministry during three predictable crises in their lives, "we can and must take preventive action to alleviate this situation," Dale told conferees at a Bible-preaching conference at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center here.

The three major crises occur in the lives of pastors who are (1) three to five years out of seminary; (2) around 40 years of age; and (3) near the pre-retirement age of 60, he said.

The first crisis involves the young pastor's idealism concerning his ministry. Pastors attending the Bible-preaching conference here agreed they were able to nurture this idealism in college and seminary, mainly by serving small, part-time churches.

"Seminary and college instructors tell their students to be on the cutting edge in church ministry, to be prophetic," states Dale. "After graduation, I found when I tried to be on the cutting edge, I was often the one who got cut."

In his first three to five years in the ministry, the young pastor discovers what the church really is. He finds church members who are stubborn, selfish and immature as Christians. Not knowing how to respond to this problem, many young pastors become discouraged and disillusioned.

Through research, Methodists and Presbyterians have discovered their largest number of dropouts occur in this initial period. Southern Baptist pastors appear to be typical of this survey.

According to Dale, Southern Baptists' pastoral tenure is shorter than most other denominations. The average pastor only stays about 2 1/2 years in any one church. Regular moves may help solve many pastors' problems, only to create issues in other areas, such as a lack of developing problem-solving skills.

The second crisis occurs at about 40 years of age. The "40-crisis" is a blow to the pastor's ego. First, at age 40, the pastor realizes he is never going to be SBC president, or pastor the largest church in his state or perhaps even his association.

Second, although the pastor is not in the ministry of the money, he has family obligations. Not being able to meet those obligations tends to make him feel less of a man. He often cannot provide for his family the way he would like. He begins to plan for retirement, and sees finances are going to be marginal. He wants to educate his children but finds he can't without financial pressures.

The pre-retirement crisis strikes most pastors at about age 60. Pastoral selection committees are no longer interested in him. He knows he is not as energetic, but he has a lot to offer in experience. Unfortunately, he is usually the only one who feels his value.

"Pastors who stay on to retirement, often retire with their morale low," says Dale. "They see themselves as working hard in a vocation all their lives. But at the end that vocation doesn't seem very interested in them."

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According to Dale, the major preventive measure available is maintaining strong marriage and family relationships. The pastor characteristically turns first to his wife and family for support when trouble comes.

"We don't lose many pastors due to family problems," he adds. "Marital pressures occasionally come when the husband surrenders to preach late in life. The wife who married an insurance salesman, but suddenly is in a parsonage, may have difficulty adjusting to her new role.

The United Church of Christ, through extensive research, has discovered only 12 percent of their pastors drop out because of family-related problems.

More pastoral problems are professional rather than personal.

Most pastors at the Bible-preaching conference agreed the next preventive priority is for the pastor to have someone he can talk with about his problems and frustrations. This can be a friend or small group of pastors joining in mutual problem-solving.

Pastors may also take advantage of a new role developing in the denomination--the pastor's pastor. Many people are seeing their role as being the pastor of the pastor, individuals who find that people just naturally call on them for advice and help. Others include directors of associational missions, denominational leaders, chaplains, college and seminary professors.

Continuing education is also a preventive step for pastors. Every pastor should continue his study, develop new skills and step up personal support systems throughout his ministry, says Dale. Every pastor needs to take deliberate steps to replenish himself through continuing education.

"The pastor's work is a giving work," he adds, "and one can't keep giving without receiving too. Most pastors recharge their emotional batteries through friendships and developing new skills.

A pastor needs regular time off for physical refreshment. He should take vacations and cultivate hobbies to stay physically and mentally refreshed.

"If Southern Baptists and their pastors will work together to minimize the frustrations and face the crisis periods, pastoral moral will improve and the number of pastoral dropouts may in turn diminish," concludes Dale.

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Glorieta Conferees Endorse
Innovation in Worship

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By Mike Chute

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--A battery of Southern Baptist pastors and lay leaders meeting here have embraced innovative worship as "necessary to Southern Baptist life as long as it is not innovation for innovation's sake and meets the needs of the church."

"It is not just cause to change the order and nature of our worship services to be different, to be clever, or to shock people," said Ernest Mosley during a Bible-preaching conference at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

"Worship experiences should be varied to more effectively meet the goals of congregational worship. Another reason is to meet the widest range of needs for the most people," said Mosley, supervisor of the church ministries section, church administration department, Sunday School Board.

"We are not innovative in that we try to shock or deliberately antagonize the congregation," said Lavonn Brown, pastor, First Church of Norman, Okla. "On the contrary, we try to be aware of where the people are in their ideas, where their needs are and what will communicate the gospel effectively to them."

The group agreed that every congregational worship experience ought to have goals to equip people, help people and support people in their mission for God.

What is innovation in one church may not be in another. In one church, to sing the doxology may be innovative. In another church, not to sing the doxology may be an innovation.

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"Southern Baptists are more open to innovative worship now than at any other time in history," said James Barry, church ministries consultant in the board's church administration department. "This has developed in order to meet the needs of various groups in society."

According to Barry, the release of the folk musical "Good News" was the one event that seemed to break through to a new type of worship pattern.

"Youth are unwilling to return to traditional patterns of worship after having seen the new forms," he added. "They want to experiment more in participation and innovation."

Anytime changes are made, the inclination is to look back to what is given up rather than ahead to what is being gained, Barry charged. Older persons are afraid today's youth will miss the rich worship experiences that were meaningful to their lives in the past.

"No matter how good a method is, it ceases to be the best method if used all the time," Barry said. "Change is necessary in all phases of a person's life. Sameness is deadening in worship, even as it is in other areas of life."

Calvin Miller, pastor of Westside Church in Omaha, Neb., agreed with Barry saying, "Familiarity breeds contempt. Once our worship becomes predictable, it is not very fascinating--people begin to stray and wander. Business and industry spend enormous amounts of money on promotion, saying the same old things about their product in new ways. The content never changes but the packaging must be as unique as it can be for every situation, everytime it is presented."

Conferees agreed that the pastor needs to prepare the congregation and interpret the reason for innovation.

Conflicts and hostilities occur when innovative ideas are forced on people suddenly without helping them see who we are as people of God and why we are doing these things, said Mosley. As innovators or leaders in worship with variety of patterns, we must be thoughtful of the congregation. We must help people participate in the changes and understand them.

Some of our traditions in Baptist churches are not biblical or sacred, according to Mosley, but they have grown up among us and been instilled in us until we think we cannot do without them.

Jesus, in his work, got people in dialogue with their traditions and contemporary life; Jesus said some of our traditions aren't worth holding on to in relation to our contemporary life, Mosely said.

Jesus healed people on the Sabbath regardless of tradition because that tradition could not be harmonized with who he was. He also went to the synagogue on the Sabbath as was his custom. He sorted out the traditions and retained those that were needed and discarded those that were not.

"The major problem in worship is bringing the reality of God to bear in the reality of life," said Larry Maddox, pastor of Maywood Baptist Church, Independence, Mo. "Some of the old patterns weren't doing this effectively. People were turned off by the worship service, slept through it, or stayed away."

"Traditional worship only appeals to one level of reality, it utilizes only one form of communication--verbal. Innovative worship involves many levels of reality through visual, non-verbal forms."

As an added advantage, innovation in worship involves greater participation of the lay membership in planning, preparation and execution of the worship experience, states Maddox.

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Pinson to Leave Seminary
For Texas Pastorate

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WICHITA FALLS, Tex. (BP)--William M. Pinson Jr., professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, has been named pastor-elect of First Baptist Church, Wichita Falls.

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Pinson, 41, interim pastor at the 7,000-member church for about seven months, will assume fulltime duties there in January. He succeeds Landrum P. Leavell II, who resigned to accept the presidency of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, January 1.

Pinson will continue to teach through December, 1975, at Southwestern Seminary, one of six theological seminaries operated by the Southern Baptist Convention.

A member of the Southwestern faculty since 1963, Pinson, a Fort Worth native, is a well-known author and speaker. He has written more than a dozen books, including a 13-volume work, "Twenty Centuries of Great Preaching," he co-authored with Clyde Fant, then a Southwestern professor and now pastor of First Baptist Church, Richardson, Tex.

Pinson said research on the urban church he did on a year-long sabbatical and his last two books, "The Local Church in Ministry" and "Applying the Gospel," directed his thoughts more and more toward the challenges of the local church.

"I really had no intention of becoming a pastor until about mid July. It's a sudden turn around for me. But I can see the hand of God's leadership in my decision process," Pinson said.

Now a member of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, Pinson has served as vice president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, vice chairman of the Texas convention's urban strategy council, a member of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and on a number of other state and SBC-wide committees.

Before joining the seminary in 1963, Pinson served as associate secretary of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, 1957-63.

He is a graduate of North Texas State University and holds a bachelor of divinity degree and a doctor of theology degree in Christian ethics from Southwestern Seminary. He has done additional study at seven other universities around the world.

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Organ Chair Established
At Southern Seminary

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LOUISVILLE (BP)--The V.V. Cooke Foundation of Louisville has established a new V.V. Cooke Chair of Organ at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary here, and the seminary's trustees have named professor Donald Paul Hustad as the chair's first occupant.

Cooke, a prominent automobile dealer and longtime trustee of the seminary, died in 1973. He was an accomplished church organist at the age of 12 and was a strong supporter of the seminary's School of Church Music from its founding in 1944.

He purchased and gave to the seminary a large home near the campus as the first headquarters of the new music school. That building is now the seminary president's home.

The current \$800,000 home of the music school, built in 1970 with funds from the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program, was named Cooke Hall in his honor.

The Cooke Foundation, organized by the Baptist layman to provide for charitable institutions, has made endowment gifts of more than \$200,000 to Southern Seminary over the past two years, in addition to the establishment of the new chair of organ, for which annual operating funds will be provided by the foundation.

Hustad, a former member of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Team, joined the seminary faculty in 1966. He holds the master and doctor of music degrees from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., and has taught at Olivet College, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and Moody Bible Institute, where he was director of the department of sacred music.

The new Cooke Professor has been a columnist for Christianity Today, musical director for the American Broadcasting Company, a recording artist, and editor of two major hymnals. For many years he directed the Crusader Men for Graham's "Hour of Decision" radio broadcasts.

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