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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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75-150

**Disciple Effort Launched By  
California Baptists; Hanks**

FRESNO, Calif. (BP)--Southern Baptists in California, in cooperation with Billie Hanks Jr., a Southern Baptist evangelist from Texas, have launched a Christian discipleship program designed to reach 400 churches in the next three years and all of the about 1,000 churches in the state convention by 1980.

Hanks spent two weeks in California conducting Christian Discipleship Seminars at churches in Norwalk and Hayward, at the request of Harry Williams, director of evangelism for California Southern Baptists. Pastors and staff members from almost 75 churches received training and will go back to their local churches to train others. They will put the program into practice for a year in their churches before holding seminars at other churches, Williams said.

The church in Hayward will present 12 hours of videotaped seminar over a cable TV system serving several communities with a population of some 300,000 and with 10,000 families subscribing to cable TV.

The local churches will receive announcements from the church explaining the Christian Discipleship Seminars and advising them of the availability of "spiritual notebooks" which they can use as they follow the seminars on the screen.

Hanks, who has spent 10 years in fulltime evangelism and discipleship training, traveling in some 64 countries, says the 75 churches beginning the plan could have about 8,000 persons disciplined in two-and-a-half years.

The 31-year-old graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary believes that discipleship and evangelism cannot be separated. "In the Christian life," he says, "discipleship is apprenticing under an older Christian. In that way you learn how to do what Christ wants you to do with your life.

"The natural setting for New Testament disciple making is in a local church in which the pastor sets the pace," says Hanks, "and disciple training could reach even more people than mass evangelism. I believe in mass evangelism and will continue to lead evangelistic crusades, but I am convinced that equipping individual Christians to win and disciple others will ultimately reach vast numbers for the cause of Christ.

Williams adds: "There have been independent movements which have had discipleship programs, but they have never really successfully related them to the local church. Billie Hanks excels, more than anyone I've seen, in relating discipleship to the local church, which is where it should be."

The growing hunger for authentic discipleship training has led to a great upsurge of interest in among Baptists. In fact, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board is in the process of developing a discipleship-evangelism approach.

Reflecting that hunger in his state for discipleship training, Williams said, "I never have presented any program to the pastors in California which has been so enthusiastically received. Mr. Hanks will return in May to train more pastors. We have taught a lot of discipleship training to people in groups, but true discipleship training is one on one--a person pouring his or her life into another. There's a difference between teaching discipleship and training disciples."

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The discipleship program can be used by California churches to help their members grow in Christian living and witnessing, Williams said. He hopes that churches now beginning the program will become the base for extending the plan to 400 churches within three years and to all of the churches in the state convention by 1980. The convention now has some 940 churches and projects more than 1,000 by 1976.

The plan includes both group seminars and person-to-person training in a "Paul/Timothy" relationship, based on II Timothy 2:2, in which a mature Christian trains a "younger" Christian for a minimum of six months. Then each trainee selects someone to train and the original "Paul" selects someone else. As time permits, Hanks says, more than one such Paul/Timothy relationship may go on simultaneously. The disciple training involves women training women and men training men.

Each disciple uses a large notebook, which includes instructions and work sheets for matters such as quiet time, prayer, Bible study, spiritual diary and Paul/Timothy time.

Four sets of lessons, presented in a series of sessions, contain the heart of the discipleship program. They tell what it means to be a disciple, how to study the Bible, how to witness and how to live a Christian life.

Hanks, president of International Evangelism Association, Fort Worth, wrote the spiritual notebook and seminar curriculum, and Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, wrote the teacher's guide to the "Master Plan of Evangelism," a resource book used during the discipleship training following a seminar.

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Dallas Association Seeks  
Exclusion of Charismatics

Baptist Press  
9/25/75

By Dan Martin

DALLAS (BP)--The nation's largest association of Southern Baptist churches will be asked, at its annual meeting, Oct. 16, to exclude "charismatic" churches from its fellowship.

Meanwhile, the Dallas Baptist Association (DBA), made up of 231 churches with some 220,000 members, has begun polling churches in the association to determine their doctrinal orthodoxy on faith healing and tongues-speaking.

The DBA proposal, passed overwhelmingly by its executive board, calls for exclusion of elected messengers from "churches which publicly endorse and practice speaking in tongues or public faith healing services in which one is declared healed."

The association will be asked to exclude at least three churches when it convenes its annual meeting in Bethany Baptist Church here.

The action has drawn sharp protests from some leading Dallas pastors. But, with the vote of the executive board as an indication--only 10 or 15 pastors voted against the recommendation--it is expected to pass overwhelmingly. None of the churches involved in charismatic ministries were present at the meeting.

While the recommendation presented to the DBA executive board scrupulously avoids mentioning any church by name, it generally is conceded to refer to Beverly Hills Baptist Church, Shady Grove Baptist Church and Pleasant Run Baptist Church.

The first two are said to practice tongues while the third reportedly is involved only in faith healing.

C. E. Colton, chairman of the DBA credentials committee, said the resolution was presented because "certain churches . . . have for several years been practicing the religious exercises known as speaking in tongues (Glossolalia) and public faith healings in which one is declared healed. . . (and) because of disruptions of fellowship which have occurred . . ." He said both tongues and faith healing are a "radical departure from customary and historic Southern Baptist practices."

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He said the recommendation is "not an attempt to tell any church what it must do. We do believe in and will defend with all our might, the autonomy of the local church. We fully recognize that our association has no right to command a church in any area of its responsibility or ministry. A Baptist church always has the right to do whatever it feels led of the Lord to do.

"But the association does have the right to determine with whom it will have fellowship," he said.

Colton, pastor of Royal Haven Baptist Church, added the recommendation is not presented on the basis of doctrine, but on fellowship.

He charged schism has been created in many churches and said the fact churches "who practice these things are now affiliated with our association leaves the impression on many outsiders that our association officially endorses or practices them.

"This puts all of us in an awkward position."

He concluded his recommendation by noting it contains "no ill will or malice toward any pastor or church. If this recommendation is adopted, we will continue to love and pray for those churches which will be affected by this action that they may be used of the Lord in ministering to the spiritual needs of mankind."

The recommendation, if adopted, "will be tantamount to withdrawal of fellowship," he said.

Before the vote was taken, several pastors spoke pro and con.

Scott Turner, pastor of Grove Haven Baptist Church, counseled taking no action.

"I believe we can do a whole lot better to ignore this and pray it will go away than to make martyrs of these churches . . ."

Several pastors have counseled the advice of Gamaliel, as recorded in Acts 5:34-39. Gamaliel counseled the Jewish Pharisees to leave the early Christians alone, saying if their ministry was of man it would perish and if it was of God it could not fail.

However, in a later interview, in the Dallas Times Herald, Billy Weber, DBA moderator, likened the charismatic movement to a "cancer," and said it will not go away, but must be excised by surgery.

Weber, pastor of Northway Baptist Church, and son of Southern Baptist Convention President Jaroy Weber, introduced resolutions at last year's DBA and Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meetings calling for charismatic churches to "voluntarily withdraw" from DBA and the Texas Convention.

He admitted that if fellowship is withdrawn by the association, churches can still remain in full relationship to the 2.2-million member state convention and the 12.5-million member SBC.

His resolution last year passed DBA, but was sidetracked by Texas Baptist convention, which merely warned of "potential dangers" of the charismatic movement.

Several pastors spoke strongly against the resolution at the Dallas Association executive board.

One, Douglas Watterson, pastor of Cliff Temple Baptist Church, noted he does not "believe what you are doing . . . it makes me queasy in my stomach . . ." He counseled "letting nature take its course.

Both Watterson and Aubrey Patterson, new pastor of Highland Baptist Church, questioned where such withdrawal of fellowship will stop.

Waterson mentioned that some of the pastors practice open communion, accept alien immersion and "are considering ordaining women as deacons . . ."

Patterson recently moved to Dallas from Charlotte, N. C., where he was moderator of an association which withdrew four churches over alien immersion.

"They said, 'We believe in autonomy, but . . .'"

"I hear you saying, 'We believe in autonomy, but . . .'"

"I wonder where it is all going to stop . . .," he said.

In an interview in the Dallas Morning News, Watterson also said, "Baptists believe the Bible is the only rule of faith and order. I don't agree with the charismatic practice theologically or philosophically.

"But they have sufficient Bible reference to support their beliefs, and, because they do not interpret it the same as I do, I do not want to deny them their beliefs or withdraw my fellowship.

"If Baptist polity begins to exclude those who do not agree with every jot and tittle, we will soon be extending that policy to all kinds of things. I don't want to open that bag."

In the same article, Mrs. Helen Parmley, religion editor for The News, quoted Herbert Howard, pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church:

"We are a missionary church, not a doctrinal or creedal group. We have never had unanimity on such matters, and I do not agree that this is a true test of fellowship."

After the vote was taken, Colton warned pastors: "There will be some repercussions. But I do not believe they will be too severe that we cannot carry on this work."

Robert McGinnis, DBA director of missions, said he has been fighting the "problem" of charismatic churches for six years. He said the churches will be polled to determine their doctrinal orthodoxy on the two issues.

A card was sent to all churches of the association, complete with four places to check, concerning glossolalia and faith healing.

Howard Conatser, pastor of Beverly Hills Baptist Church, said he will return the card but will not fill it out. Instead, he will submit a letter, endorsed by the congregation, stating the church's position. The letter reportedly spells out the church's position on the charismatic gifts, rather than merely giving a "yes" or "no."

Olen Griffing, pastor of Shady Grove Baptist Church, told Dallas Times Herald religion writer Frank Taggart he does not intend to fill out the card.

Griffing told Taggart the card is a "trap."

Edgar Terrell, pastor of Pleasant Run Baptist Church, said he would indicate on his card the church does not officially endorse the charismatic gifts. His church has taken no official position, he said.

Beverly Hills Church, which has had phenomenal growth since it began its charismatic ministry several years ago, is sixth in contributions to the association.

This year to date it has given \$5,162 to DBA, ranking behind Carrollton First, Dallas First, Shiloh Terrace, Richardson Heights and Royal Haven.

The other churches have given lesser amounts. Some of the churches in the association, not associated with charismatic teachings, it was noted, have contributed absolutely nothing to the association during the past year.

Group Seeks Young Adult  
Evangelism Strategy

By Tim Nicholas

ATLANTA (BP)--Sixteen participants involved in ministries to young adults completed a two-day "think tank" program here designed to begin developing a national strategy for young adult evangelism.

The conference was sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's office of young adult evangelism, directed by Joe Ford.

Sharing their concepts of ministry to persons in the post high school through 34 age group, the participants agreed that a church needs to begin with a core of leadership committed to teaching others to be disciples of Christ.

"As a good picture is worth 1,000 words," said Steve Cloud, youth minister at First Baptist Church, Winter Park, Fla., "so a good model or pattern is worth 10,000 manuals."

Church training programs, participants indicated, should include how to budget time, use intercessory prayer, witness, memorize Bible verses and discover spiritual gifts. "I can't train my people overnight to become effective and consistent witnesses," said Cloud.

He said that in training people for evangelism, ministers need to rid themselves of the numerical success syndrome and lead people into consistent Christian lifestyles.

"We've trained people to share what they've never experienced," noted Cloud, speaking of some church leaders he has had experience with.

Steve O'Kelly, pastor to young adults at First Baptist Church, Houston, Tex., reported that young adults are the fastest growing group in his church. "Eighty percent of our 150 visitors each week are in this age group," he said. "We began building a core of leadership in our young adults," he said, "asking for short term commitments, such as giving seven minutes a day to intercessory prayer."

As interest grew, the ministry began forming "families"--small groups of 8-12 people committed to helping one another grow in their commitment and the understanding of their relationship to God," he said.

"Now we have 33 discipling families intact. One is even forming a grandchild family. We tape weekly conferences in leadership training for future leaders and we've tied these families into Sunday School classes.

"One Roman Catholic family had been in a discipling family for five months when their priest heard about it, and now he's planning to visit the discipling family to take the concept back to his church," O'Kelly added. "He got excited when he saw the cause of the changes in his members' lives.

"I asked one of our young singles what she did for lunch after church," continued O'Kelly, "She said she'd go home and eat a sandwich." That was the beginning of another ministry to young adults.

"After fellowship and worship with 2,700 other Christians, these singles were going home to eat alone," said O'Kelly, so we began having dinner at the church every other week for singles."

"That didn't last for long. Married couples began inviting them into their homes for Sunday dinner, and they began cooking together at their apartments, so the ministry didn't need to go on any more," said O'Kelly.

Harry Williams, director of evangelism for California Southern Baptists, said, "We're confusing churchmanship with discipleship. We need more people at the top, both pastors and people in denominational positions, who are willing to start saying that training disciples is important. We've got to start building model churches," he said.