



**FEATURES**  
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SBC Executive Committee  
480 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor  
James Lee Young, Feature Editor

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**TV's Lawrence Welk  
Talks About Faith**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Lawrence Welk, 72-year-old orchestra conductor and television entertainer, says his Christian faith "means more to me than I could ever tell you in words."

Welk was in Nashville recently where he autographed copies of his latest book, "My America, Your America," at the Baptist Book Store.

He talked about his career, his popular TV show, his new book, and his religious commitment, during a news conference.

"Religion has been belittled," Welk commented. "And while it has been belittled, a lot of false gods have arisen. But to my way of thinking, there are no better laws than God's laws. If you follow them, you're in very good shape," the Roman Catholic layman said.

"Our country was built with the faith of people like that." But, he added, "We've fallen away from that."

Welk also discussed his "plan" or "system" of working with people, which evolved from his many years of experience in the music business and is detailed in his new book. The plan emphasizes such traditional virtues as hard work, commitment and personal involvement, which Welk believes were fundamental in building this country.

The primary objective of his system, claims Welk, is to "develop people." He believes that an employer should personally train and develop his employees by helping them reach their highest potential.

Welk has been active in the music business for more than five decades and says he has never held contract agreements over the heads of his performers. In fact, he notes, there is no such thing as a contract within his musical organization, a practice at which many businessmen would scoff.

"I think people operate better under a system of personal freedom, rather than being tied down," Welk explains. "We stay together because we want to stay together, and we know that to do that we have to do the best possible job for each other."

Evidently, that type of business approach has been successful. Welk's "musical family" still conducts several tours each year, and his group is second only to Elvis Presley at the box office, according to Welk's manager.

When ABC-TV cancelled his television show six years ago, Welk promptly syndicated the program, now carried weekly in more than 225 cities across America.

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BP Photo mailed to Baptist state papers

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Wrong Info 'Wines Up'  
In Broadman Press Book

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NASHVILLE (BP)--A fermented fable was erroneously included in a recently discovered copy of "Payday Everyday," the autobiography of R.G. Lee, pastor emeritus of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention (1949-51).

During a revival led by Lee in North Carolina, a woman bought a copy of the well known Southern Baptist's life story, but was surprised to find a detailed explanation of "Winemaking at Home" about midway through the book.

Without giving the recipe a try, the startled woman returned the book for a regular copy.

A Broadman Press spokesman said the problem was due to an error by the bookbinder, and to his knowledge, this was the only copy containing the "juicy" extra.

The mistake might have been more appropriate in Lee's latest book for Broadman, "Grapes From Gospel Vines."

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## Association Expels Church Over 'Alien Baptism' Issue

ANDERSON, S. C. (BP)--Local church autonomy clashed with that of the local association here when Saluda Baptist Association voted 450-87 to expell First Baptist Church, Clemson, S. C., over the church's receiving of persons from other churches without requiring baptism by immersion. The Clemson church's policy was adopted in August, 1974.

The action, taken during the association's annual meeting here at Varennes Heights Baptist Church, followed a recommendation by the association's executive committee to withdraw associational membership from the church, located near the Clemson University campus. The church's pastor is Roger Lovette.

The association's action does not affect the church's affiliation with the South Carolina Baptist Convention or the Southern Baptist Convention.

The associational executive committee's recommendation stated:

"In view of the fact that Clemson First Baptist Church has failed to rescind the action concerning the receiving of members who have not been immersed from churches of other faiths, the (associational) executive committee regretfully recommends that fellowship with the First Baptist Church of Clemson be withdrawn and, if at a later time it is found in compliance with the bylaws and constitution of this association, that full fellowship be restored on proper request from the Clemson First Baptist Church."

Immediate reaction on both sides was of regrets, and Clemson church leaders expressed disappointment at the action, according to reports.

The association's executive committee had noted the action taken in 1974 by the Clemson church and appointed a committee in January 1975 to contact the church. The committee brought to the annual meeting in October 1975 a plea to the church to reaffirm "scriptural baptism."

When the committee met in September it voted to recommend that the church be excluded from associational membership.

The church was declared guilty of violating the association's constitution, which requires that member churches accept persons from other churches who have been baptized by immersion only or who agree to be baptized by immersion.

Persons baptized into the Clemson church are immersed. But the church accepts as members persons who have been baptized by sprinkling or pouring, reports said, a practice not acceptable under the association's bylaws.

John Crow, chairman of deacons for First Baptist, Clemson, said that a simple majority of the church's members had previously voted to return to its old requirements of baptism by immersion, but the vote did not receive the church's required two-thirds majority and failed.

The 1,028-member Clemson church has been a part of the association since 1907, said Crow. "We are Baptists in the best Baptist tradition. We are not bogged down in academics that drain our strength. We carry the message of Christ."

Lovette, who became pastor of First Baptist, Clemson, after the church's constitutional change allowing membership without immersion was enacted, expressed appreciation for the year the church was allowed by the association to work out its decision, then said:

"We earnestly desire for this relationship to continue. If you do decide to expell us from your membership, it will be the wish of this body and not the wish of the church."

Roy Campbell, pastor of East Clemson Baptist Church, spoke in favor of expulsion. He read a scriptural account of the baptism of Jesus, then said he was shocked that 25 members of the associational executive committee had voted in September to allow First Baptist, Clemson, to retain associational standing. Twenty-seven had voted no,

one report said. A subsequent vote by the executive committee recommended that the church be expelled; however, totals of that vote were not released.

"We should not have to act on this matter," Campbell said. "First Church has changed. We must not allow insidious intrusions like this."

Prior to the vote, moderator Paul Talmadge admonished the "messengers." "Our actions must be orderly and in Christian love. No one must leave here thinking that anything was done incorrectly." An earlier motion for a secret ballot failed. Following the vote, Lovette told the messengers that he and the Clemson church have worked long and hard to maintain a positive and meaningful relationship with the association. "We deeply regret the action of the association."

Campbell told Baptist Press later that pastors he had surveyed in the area "do not have a spirit of vindictiveness toward First Baptist, Clemson, and hope the church will someday be able to return to the association."

The Sunday following the association's vote to expell First Baptist, Clemson, the church adopted its 1977 budget and included \$400, as it did in 1976, to go to the Saluda Association.

In an editorial following the association's vote to expell the church, John Roberts, editor of South Carolina's Baptist Courier, said the association "acted within its rights," noted that the church had "fully admitted to the charge" and had "cooperated fully throughout the committee inquiry . . .

"Just as Saluda Association was proper in action, South Carolina Baptist Convention would be wrong to raise the question about First Church, Clemson," Roberts said.

"The difference is clear. In the Baptist denominational structure, the association is concerned with doctrinal matters. The state convention is not. It exists only as a vehicle for cooperative support of the institution and mission.

"Churches do not 'belong' to the South Carolina Convention or the Southern Baptist Convention," said Roberts. "The state convention is composed of 'messengers' from churches in the state which bear the Baptist name and give dollar support to convention causes. The guidelines are similar with only appropriate differences of words for the SBC," Roberts said.

". . . In the Baptist structure the local church is supreme," said Roberts. "It identifies with and supports the convention of its choice. Its only actual membership, in which it can be voted in or out, is with the district association." Conventions can vote to deny seating to messengers.

Saluda Association has 66 churches with memberships totaling over 32,000. J. C. Rice is the association's director of missions.