

February 22, 1956

127 Ninth Avenue, North — Nashville, Tennessee

SHIFT TO CITY REPORTED
IN NEW BAPTIST SURVEY

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Farm people have been moving to the city for attractive jobs and more education.

Without moving at all, some families once considered rural discover they have ^{become} city residents as cities sprawl out further into the country.

Cities are growing much faster than rural areas.

J. P. Edmunds, Nashville, statistician for the Southern Baptist Convention, says these are some reasons cities are great challenges for winning men to Christ.

In a survey recently released, Edmunds reports that in the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole, city people are unreached to a greater degree by the denomination than are rural people.

The survey covered a five-year period ending Jan. 1, 1955, and included 24 states represented in the Southern Baptist Convention by their own state Baptist conventions.

The survey was captioned, "Populations Shifts and Their Effect Upon the Southern Baptist Convention, 1950-1955."

"While every state except Arkansas showed a growth in total population during 1950-1955, 10 states experienced a decrease in rural population," Edmunds declares. No states in the SBC territory showed a decline in city population.

City numbers increased 15.1 per cent in the 24 states during the five years, but rural numbers increased only 1.4 per cent.

The survey introduced these additional facts:

1. "Due to several factors, the Southern Baptist Convention states as a group have shown a significantly larger proportional increase in population since 1950 than have other states," according to Edmunds.
2. As expected, states in which Southern Baptist work is newest showed the greatest percentage gains in church membership, including both rural and city churches.
3. Rural churches still offer many opportunities for Southern Baptists. The eight million members of Southern Baptist churches are about evenly distributed between rural and city. During the survey period, only one state -- South Carolina -- failed to report an increase in rural membership. Rural churches are growing in spite of heavy migration to the city.
4. "Southern Baptist principles and methods of work are effective wherever and whenever put into practice," Edmunds says.

5. The 24 states in SBC territory, which have 56 per cent of the population of the U. S., seem to be a major site of population shifts in the nation.

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NOTE TO STATE EDITORS: Mr. Edmunds has sent to you a copy of the survey on which this article is based. For obvious reasons--space limitations, etc.--the Baptist Press story can not bring out the significant facts pertaining to each individual state. You may want to study the survey for information about your own state, then write a story about it, and run it and the Baptist Press story side by side. In this way, you could present both the general findings and the local application. This is merely a suggestion, however, --The Baptist Press.

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SOCIAL SECURITY WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE FALLS ON APRIL 15

WASHINGTON--(BP)--Southern Baptist ministers who have applied for social security coverage, but who would now like to withdraw, must do so by April 15.

The government's department of internal revenue reports a minister may withdraw by filing a written notice of withdrawal with the same district director who received the minister's earlier application.

The written notice for withdrawal must be received no later than April 15, the final day for filing income tax returns. If notice of withdrawal isn't filed by that time, the social security form filed earlier becomes effective and is thereafter irrevocable.

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BAPTIST CARTOONIST WINS GEORGE WASHINGTON AWARD

WACO, Tex.--(BP)--Jack Hamm, whose religious cartoons appear in many Baptist papers and in daily newspapers, has received a George Washington honor medal from Freedoms Foundation.

The award is based on a Hamm cartoon issued for National Newspaper Week last October, entitled "America's Atlas."

The cartoon pictured a world globe with a map of the United States. Kneeling on the United States was Atlas--named in this instance "The Christian Press." He held a pen in his hand and near him was a well of ink marked "Truth."

On Atlas' shoulders stood a typical-looking American man, symbolizing "Stronger Citizens." The Scripture reference for Hamm's cartoon was Phil. 4:8, "Whatsoever things are pure. . .Think on these things."

The annual conference on American ideals conducted by Baylor University here also received a Freedoms Foundation citation.

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This is the third such award both to Baylor and to Hamm, a former art instructor at Baylor and outstanding Baptist layman. Hamm will appear as a cartoonist on the program of the annual Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference in Kansas City in May.

(Note to State Editors: The prize-winning cartoon was released the weekend of Sept. 30-Oct. 2, 1955 in case you planned to re-run it.)

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DOBBINS ACCEPTS GOLDEN
GATE SEMINARY POSITION

BERKELEY, Calif.--(BP)--Gaines S. Dobbins, for 37 years a professor at Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville, Ky., will join Golden Gate Baptist Seminary here as "distinguished professor of church administration."

Trustees of Golden Gate announced the coming of Dobbins. They also elected a dean, director of field work, registrar, and librarian at their annual board meeting recently.

Dobbins is retiring from the Southern Seminary faculty, but has agreed to help Golden Gate build its program of religious education and church administration, according to Harold K. Graves, Golden Gate's president. Dobbins is dean of Southern's school of religious education.

Trustees elected William A. Carleton full professor of church history and seminary dean. Jack W. Manning will become director of field work and Miss Isma Johnson will succeed Manning as registrar.

A. J. Hyatt, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Richmond, Calif., has been elected librarian. The former librarian, S. Madge Lewis, will be supervisor of technical and reader services.

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.....J. Herbert Gilmore is new pastor of Deer Park Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky. He came to the church from being pastor of First Baptist Church, Marshall, Mo.

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.....American Baptists, when they meet in Convention in Seattle, Wash., June 15-22, will have as their theme: "I will build my church." Their Scripture text will be Zech. 4:6, " . . . Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord. . ." and their Convention hymn will be "The Church's One Foundation."

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.....Joe H. Cothen, pastor of Second Baptist Church, Bogalusa, La., has accepted pastorate of Thomasville Baptist Church, Thomasville, Ala.

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