

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041

DALLAS Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1986

MEMPHIS Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2481

NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2000

RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151

WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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**Southern Baptists Urged To
Be Worth Their Salt--And Light**

By Catherine Allen

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--With a taste of salt on their tongues, 17,000 Southern Baptists followed the example of Evangelist Billy Graham in affirming their intention to present Jesus Christ to every person in the world.

The finale of the 120th Southern Baptist Convention was a commitment ceremony to culminate three days of drama, sermon, business, and song which painted the picture of the denomination's long range crusade called Bold Mission.

"The Lord Jesus calls us to be salt and light in a world corrupt and dark. By any definition this is a bold mission," said Jesse Fletcher, pastor of First Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn., in launching the program.

The themes of salt and light were sprinkled through the premier of a musical narrative, "Bold Mission," composed by William J. Reynolds, secretary of the Church Music department of the Sunday School Board, Nashville. The musical was performed by students from Hannibal-LaGrange College, while students from William Jewell College pantomimed its message.

Testimonies by Allen Elston, missionary to the Indians in Warm Springs, Ore., and by Mary Lois Summers of Fort Worth, a missionary appointee to Brazil, gave the audience examples of the missionary calling and commitment typical of 5,000 missionaries already under appointment.

The messengers' stance on the Bold Mission effort to evangelize the world by the close of the century was capsuled in videotape clips from earlier moments of the convention and by a videotaped lecture on Biblical teachings about missions by Cornell Goerner, retired Foreign Mission Board executive.

Fletcher led a service in which messengers could affirm their callings into various phases of witness and ministry. In order, missionaries, evangelists, teachers, pastors, church staff, and the laity stood, then read statements of commitment in unison. Fletcher challenged them to be the salt that preserves and flavors, the light that guides and reveals.

Graham, a Southern Baptist himself, told the audience, "God has given our denomination vision, visibility, acceptance, opportunity, leadership and resources to take the spiritual initiative in our day as no other denomination anywhere in the world has.

"It is possible now technologically to reach the whole world with the Gospel for the first time, and God will hold us accountable if we don't do it."

Graham summarized changes and challenges the Baptists must hurdle in Bold Mission--scientific advance, shift of wealth to the Middle East, decrease of democracy, violence, lack of education, and restructuring of the family. Most crucial, according to Graham, is the "throwing aside of the Christian ethic."

"Keep your eyes on Belgrade June 15," Graham urged the Baptists, predicting a confrontation between Leonid Brezhnev of the Soviet Union and President Jimmy Carter on the issue of human rights.

"I'm for our President and his stand," Graham told the applauding throng.

"We as Christians must shout to the world, you must be born again. This means Bold Mission, evangelism, and discipleship."

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Graham preceded the final ceremony of commitment by urging his fellow Baptists to approach Bold Mission with conviction, commitment, and conduct.

"Salt is a preservative. The Christian must have a certain antiseptic influence in his community. He must be the person who helps defeat corruption and makes it easier for people to be good."

Amid continued applause, Graham advised the messengers to invite persons of other races into their homes.

"Be the first one to put your arm around a person of another race and say I love you," he said. "The communists are doing it. Why can't the supernatural church have a supernatural love?"

Then Graham stood among conventioners as they opened packets of salt, tasted a few grains and stated their acceptance of Christ's command to be the salt of the earth.

On the strains of a missionary hymn they rode down the escalators of H. Roe Bartle Convention Center remembering 10 two-letter words hurled at them by Warren Hultgren, the Oklahoma pastor who chaired the Missions Challenge Committee which developed many aspects of Bold Mission:

"If it is to be, it is up to me."

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SBC Resolution Doesn't
Surprise Gay Pastor

By Carol Franklin

Baptist Press
6/20/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Jim Glycer said here he was not surprised by the action of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) condemning homosexuality.

Glycer is pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church here, a congregation which ministers primarily to homosexuals. He has had many experiences of Christian reactions to homosexuality because, he says, he is himself homosexual.

"Baptists share a common assumption with Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Catholics that homosexuality is a freely chosen life style. I challenge that basic assumption," Glycer said. "There is no more choice than with lefthandedness. If it were a choice a lot of gays wouldn't be gay."

Glycer feels that the SBC resolution is "mild" by comparison to others. "The Lutherans were a lot more harsh in what they said about us," he said.

"The experts divide on the cause of homosexuality," Glycer noted. "Some say we're born with the predisposition, others say the pattern is set between ages three and five."

Glycer said that the estimated 10 percent of the population which is homosexual cuts across all nationalities, social levels, and racial lines. "This raises the theological question of creation. What was God's purpose in creating 10 percent of his children this way? Was it to be damned? That doesn't fit with a good God."

In relating his own experience, Glycer shared his intense feelings of self-disgust as he admitted his homosexuality.

"I felt like I had leprosy. I despised myself as weak and sinful. I went through psychotherapy for 15 years trying to be straight. I get angry when people say gays could change if they just wanted to badly enough. I would have cut off my arm if I could have gone straight," Glycer said intently. "It would have been a small enough price to pay."

Glycer was forced into re-examining the Biblical passages which are usually interpreted as clearly anti-homosexual. "I had been called by God to the ministry. If I wanted to minister and also accept myself as I am, I had to know what the Bible really said.

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"Christ's message is universal," Glycer emphasized.

Glycer agreed that everyone has the right to a private religious judgment on homosexuality. "It's when you move that religious judgment into the public domain, as with prohibition, that you run into problems.

"Southern Baptists are inconsistent in this area. You say the role of government should be restricted but you want the government in the bedroom. Policemen have no place in the bedroom," he said with a touch of humor.

While Glycer had no bitter words for Anita Bryant, who crusaded against homosexuality in Dade County, Fla., he did say he thought she was naive in her assumption that gays recruit.

Glycer has come a long way from the miserable man who wanted to commit suicide because he hated himself for being a homosexual. "God has given me peace and led me to a new place of ministry. All I want now is to help other gays come to the same self-acceptance in God's love."

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Reports on Missions, Radio-TV, Retirement Heard at SBC

Baptist Press
6/20/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Missions at home and abroad, denominational retirement funds and radio and television communication highlighted reports of four major Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) agencies at the 120th annual meeting of the SBC here.

Baker J. Cauthen, executive director of the Foreign Mission Board, reported that Southern Baptists now have more than 2,700 missionaries in 87 countries. "The sun never sets on Southern Baptist foreign mission work," he declared.

Cauthen asked the convention and churches to support President Carter's videotaped appeal earlier in the convention to enlist large numbers of Southern Baptist volunteers of all ages to engage in mission activities at home and abroad.

"The time has come for Southern Baptists no longer to inch our way across the world," Cauthen said. "Jesus Christ is for all men everywhere, and we mean business in implementing the Great Commission," the veteran leader added.

William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer of the Home Mission Board, delivered his first report to the convention since assuming leadership of the Atlanta-based agency Jan. 1.

He called upon the convention to implement its plan "to win America to Christ" and said that the Home Mission Board is vital in that task.

Home missions is "people reaching people" and "people being the word of God," he said.

Tanner reported a missionary force of 2,492, up 368 from a year ago, in addition to almost 1,300 student summer missionaries and 142 short-term adult Christian Service Corps volunteers.

In another report, Annuity Board president Darold H. Morgan pointed to a record year for the denominational agency which administers ministers' retirements and provides insurance and investment programs.

Morgan noted that the board currently holds a record total of more than \$472 million in assets. Nearly \$16.5 million was paid in retirement benefits during 1976.

In addition, Morgan reported 840 new annuitants during the year. As of Dec. 31, some 140 ministers and 285 widows were receiving benefits through the Annuity Board.

Morgan also introduced a new promotional campaign, "Route 10," the new Southern Baptist Retirement Program. The plan urges churches to invest 10 percent of ministers' total compensation package with the board. Such substantial investment is necessary, Morgan noted, because of constant inflationary pressures.

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Radio and Television Commission president Paul M. Stevens reported a record 36 percent increase in Cooperative Program funding to the agency in Fort Worth, Tex.

Increased funding has permitted stepped-up production of programs and has helped commission programs to be aired on a record number of stations, Stevens noted.

He called for continuing convention attention to the field of mass communications, citing the "pregnant power and potential" of the media in today's world.

Stevens told messengers that a special committee named as a result of convention action last year in Norfolk, Va., recommended continuation of "Powerline," a syndicated radio program featuring rock music and now aired on 915 stations.

A messenger at last year's convention had protested use of rock music for religious purposes. The program's producer, Claude Cox, emphasized, however, that the rock format was chosen so that "Powerline" could be aired on "top 40" radio stations. It contains direct Christian appeals to young people.

The convention approved the committee's recommendation to continue the program without opposition.

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Mission Volunteer Effort May
Supplant Cooper Organizations

Baptist Press
6/20/77

By Tim Nicholas

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--With the passage of the mission volunteer resolution at the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Kansas City, Owen Cooper, Yazoo City industrialist and former SBC president, sees the demise of two mission support organizations he helped organize.

The resolution called for 5,000 persons to be enlisted and financed by individuals, churches or groups of churches to work a year or two in home or foreign missions.

Cooper is involved with Agricultural Missions Foundation, a Baptist-operated fund raiser for agricultural mission projects, and Universal Concern Foundation, which functions to promote the gospel message in India, where preaching missionaries are currently not allowed. Southern Baptists operate only a hospital in India now.

Cooper said, "I think this resolution should result in the expansion of the number of people serving and enlarging the number of channels through which they might serve.

"Some laymen in groups who hitherto have not found a channel, have gone on their own," he said. "This will probably make that unnecessary in the future."

Cooper, who said that his church, First Baptist Church of Yazoo City, Miss., has already voted to sponsor a volunteer missionary under the terms of the resolution, says that "any para-church organization I'm involved with I hope would be absorbed."

The resolution calls for the state mission boards, the Home Mission Board, and the Foreign Mission Board, working with the Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood, and Sunday School Board to enlist and utilize the volunteers. It was born in a luncheon Cooper and several SBC denominational leaders had with President Jimmy Carter in early June.

Carter, who invited the leaders to Washington for the luncheon, challenged the group to take advantage of involving lay people in voluntary mission service.

Cooper said that Carter told the group his thinking started back in 1968 when Carter, just defeated in his first bid for governor of Georgia, went on a layman's crusade in Massachusetts. Cooper says that Carter's witnessing team experienced 43 persons making spiritual commitments in a week's work.

"It convinced him laymen could get something done," says Cooper.

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After the luncheon in Washington the SBC leaders decided to do something. They drafted the motion which they submitted to the SBC Executive Committee and was subsequently adopted by the messengers. Cooper, an Executive Committee member, presented the motion to messengers.

"President Carter said we could call on him for anything he could do so we decided to call on him to communicate his feelings to the convention," says Cooper. He did so by videotape.

The group offered to write the text of Carter's message for him, but he declined. "I want to write my own message," Cooper quoted Carter as saying.

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BPRA Gives Awards To
8 Baptist Organizations

Baptist Press
6/20/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Eight Baptist organizations won awards from the Baptist Public Relations Association (BPRA) for exhibits during the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) here, June 15-17.

The awards, judged by public relations and media representatives from the host city, were presented at a BPRA breakfast in Kansas City.

In Category A, which included displays costing up to \$500, Baylor University, Waco, Tex., and the SBC Historical Commission took first and second place honors respectively.

The Baptist World Alliance won top honor in the \$500-\$1,000 category with Mississippi College coming in second.

For exhibits of \$1,000-\$2,000, the SBC Foreign Mission Board took first place, with Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., second.

Awarded first place in the category for booths costing over \$2,000 was the SBC Sunday School Board. The Radio and Television Commission took second for the category.

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SBC Hears Reports on BWA
Public Affairs, State Papers

Baptist Press
6/20/77

By Charlie Warren

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Messengers to the 120th session of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) received annual progress reports here from the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and the Committee on State Baptist Papers.

"We as Baptists--not just Southern Baptists but we as Baptists in 141 countries--have never had such a day of opportunity as we have today," said Robert Denny, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, which has its headquarters in Washington, D. C. "Historians are likely to ask what Baptists did with their day of opportunity during the last quarter of the century.

"I hope historians will be able to say, 'They pooled their resources and expertise, extended themselves to the farthest reaches of the world for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.' We either extend ourselves or become extinct."

Denny also brought greetings to Southern Baptists from BWA president David Y. K. Wong of Hong Kong, whom he identified as "president of 33 million Baptists in 106 national Baptist conventions in 141 countries around the world."

Denny said the BWA seeks to help Baptists to know each other and to share ideas and experiences with each other, while assisting the community of Baptists in evangelism, world hunger relief and "especially to help those in danger of losing their religious liberty."

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, also based in Washington, D. C., based his report on the premise that "what happens in government affects the life of the churches" and that "Baptists are clearly committed to the prophetic role of religion in public affairs."

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Wood reported that the joint committee is currently concerned and at work especially in three "critical" areas.

He said a crisis is emerging in the area of taxation of church property and that it involves the question of what does and does not constitute a church. He believes that decision should be made by religious institutions, not by government.

The other critical areas he spoke of were the problem of public funds and church schools as it relates to the issue of separation of church and state; and the issue of human rights and international affairs.

He said he was encouraged by an increasing concern for human rights, but said that religious liberty is far from being a reality in the world today.

Jack Harwell of Atlanta, reporting for the Committee on State Baptist Papers, said the committee believes "that the work of Southern Baptists will prosper as long as it is articulated and supported by the state paper.

"Whatever vital issue confronts our convention, it is qualified and expounded in our state Baptist papers," he said. "The influence of these publications is far-reaching and constructive."

Harwell, editor of Georgia Baptists' Christian Index, reported a combined state paper circulation of 1,852,000 and a goal for 1980 for a circulation of two million.

He challenged churches to include state Baptist papers in the church budget as a way for keeping church members informed and inspired.

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An Eye For History: Not
Enough To See Women's Role

By Irma Duke

Baptist Press
6/20/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--"To ignore the contributions of Southern Baptist women would be to read history with one eye shut," a display at the 120th session of the 132-year-old Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) proclaimed here.

The general concensus among persons interviewed in the halls of H. Roe Bartle Convention Center seems to be that one eye has been shut but is now opening.

Marian (Mrs. J. Marse) Grant of Raleigh, N. C., said women up through the middle ages and beyond have had leadership roles in the church but in the last couple of centuries they have taken the back seats in leadership activities.

Mrs. Grant is the newly-elected chair person of the convention's Committee on Order of Business. She is the only woman currently serving as head of an SBC committee or board.

"If we can change the Jewish concept of the Saturday Sabbath, then we can change the Jewish concept of women in the outer courtyard," said Helen Graves, wife of Allen Graves, dean of the school of religious education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Mrs. Graves told about an emeritus Southern Baptist missionary to China, Rose Marlowe. She said on the field Miss Marlowe served in almost every role of the church, even as a deacon. But, she said, when she came home on furloughs, she had to speak in the basement of the church.

All those interviewed agreed that the woman's role in the convention has changed and that the change has been in "a good spirit."

James L. Sullivan of Nashville, the outgoing president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said, "I have seen a marvelous upturn for women, done in a right spirit, in my 25 years in convention life. I think a woman will be elected convention president, although I may not live to see it."

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Alta Morrow, director of program coordination at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, said the change has been very encouraging to her. Mrs. Graves said there has been some change in the role of women in the convention but "not as much as I would like."

"It seems women are finding their place, the role women can play not just in the local church, but in the whole convention," said Alta (Mrs. Lynn E.) May of Nashville, whose husband is executive director of the Historical Commission.

Christine (Mrs. A. Harrison) Gregory, president of the Women's Missionary Union (WMU), said the more you know about something, the more you are interested in it and more and more women are becoming interested in the whole convention. She has been active in WMU for many years but until three years ago, the convention itself did not interest her. After the WMU sessions were over, she returned home to Danville, Va.

Those interviewed agreed that some women are capable of convention leadership now and many more will be as participation and education increases for women. Some used Myra (Mrs. Carl E.) Bates, outgoing convention vice president, as an example. "Mrs. Bates presiding was a true compliment to women," Mrs. Gregory said. Mrs. Bates was the second woman ever to be vice president.

Ruth (Mrs. Martin) Bradley of Nashville has been serving as assistant to the recording secretary for 13 years and will continue to do so as her husband takes the office. According to Mrs. Bradley, "men are sitting up and taking notice that women are doing their homework on committees and are sometimes taking their jobs more seriously than men."

Mrs. Graves said that women can serve in any capacity that a man serves in providing they have been called by God. "That day is coming when women will be leading, and I can't see any place in convention life that a woman is not capable of serving in," she added.

Birth control and education have been two main reasons women have begun to take more active roles in the convention, Mrs. Grant explained. "In years past, a woman didn't have much choice but to stay home and raise children and they had very little opportunity for higher education.

Some people expressed concern that even though women had served on committees they had only been tokens.

Mrs. Grant said initially she wondered if she had been placed on the Committee on Order of Business as a token but she said in the meetings she was treated as an equal, even though she was the first woman in 30 years to serve on the committee and will be the first woman in history to serve as head of the committee. She said people should not be considered for positions because of their sex but as persons with abilities.

Of 285 new board and committee members elected at the SBC, 23 were women.

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Surgeon Says God Gave Him
'Life-time RA Appointment'

Baptist Press
6/20/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--"When President Carter appoints one of this country's ambassadors it is usually for a four-year term. When you are 'appointed' a Royal Ambassador for God it is a life-time appointment."

Dr. H. S. Imamura, a Winston-Salem, N. C., surgeon, told Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) messengers listening to the Brotherhood Commission report here of his own experience in the Royal Ambassador (RA) missions education program for boys sponsored by the SBC Brotherhood Commission.

"In Japan's chaotic, post-World War II days a missionary taught me English, instilled Christian traditions in my heart and talked about Royal Ambassadors," he said. "I have been an RA ever since I accepted Jesus as my Savior."

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Glendon McCullough, the Brotherhood's executive director, told messengers "the grass roots lay mission movement in Southern Baptist Life" is leading to growth in the organization's enrollment.

"Today there are more churches with Brotherhood organizations than in the last 11 years," he said. "This is significant and consistent growth.

"We pledge our efforts to reach every man and boy in every Southern Baptist church with information about our Southern Baptist mission involvement. We are excited about missions endeavor and we are committed to providing the best support we can."

McCullough called the commission's Royal Ambassador program the "best boys program in this nation." It was founded to provide an adequate mission forces climate, and to lay the groundwork for future support.

In another report, Miss Carolyn Weatherford, Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) executive director, announced "an intensive campaign with a goal of a Woman's Missionary Union organization in every local church in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Miss Weatherford stressed the necessity for intensifying efforts for more church participation in missions.

"We are launching a three-year emphasis on missions education, mission study of what the Bible says about the subject and, with the Brotherhood Commission, a missions night out program and church-wide study on the graded series program of mission education.

"To be magnificently involved in missions there must be indepth involvement and this includes studying, money, and providing missions education in the churches."

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Billy Graham: He and
His Pulpit Are Inseparable

By Dan Martin

Baptist Press
6/20/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Billy Graham takes his pulpit with him when he preaches. It arrived at the H. Roe Bartle Convention Center here, shortly before the 120th annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) where Graham addressed the closing night session.

Heavily crated, the special pulpit drew both curious attention and disinterest. "I heard it was bulletproof," one reporter whispered, looking at the large wooden box.

"No," said T. W. Wilson, Graham's executive assistant. "It isn't bulletproof; not at all. He's never had any security guards; he depends on the Lord for his protection."

Bill O'Brien of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, and a member of the committee which arranged for Graham to appear at the convention, said as preparations began, Graham was asked what he needed. "I was told he would bring his own pulpit," O'Brien said.

Wilson, who arrived for a press conference with Graham, explained that years ago--when Graham was just starting--"Mr. Watson of IBM" noticed Graham having difficulty looking down with a small pulpit. "Mr. Watson had an idea for an adjustable pulpit. He made it and we're still using it."

Wilson said a second pulpit has been added because of the amount of traveling Graham does.

"It is adjustable and it was made specifically for radio and television," Wilson said. "It has three warning lights. One shows five minutes, another three and the last one for one minute. That's real valuable for a TV preacher," he said.

O'Brien said the pulpit is electronically adjustable, allowing for Graham's 6-foot, 4-inch height. It also is big, because "he uses big notes. He doesn't wear glasses in public yet, only for studying and reading."

Wilson said the pulpit is valuable to Graham "because we've found most athletic stadiums don't have proper pulpits or PA (public address) systems.

"We try to fix everything up so. It all has to be right, especially when people have to listen to every word. If they can't hear they won't come back," he said.

Asked the cost of shipping the pulpit across the country, Wilson said it is "not expensive at all."

"Anyway," he said, "why have the Cadillac and not the horn?"