



-- BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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1-23-78

Allen Says SBC Must 'Storm The Barricades'

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Jimmy R. Allen challenged SBC leadership to redouble efforts in "storming the barricades" which would hinder efforts to reach the world with the message of Christ.

Allen, addressing a wide cross section of leadership at the SBC Interagency Council Forum, identified the barricades as time, territoriality, tokenism and timidity.

Elaborating, the pastor of San Antonio's First Baptist Church characterized territoriality as a tendency which could entrap the SBC. "It is absolutely essential and part of our genius that we are able to minimize duplication and maximize impact with procedures and program statements," he declared. "But we must avoid becoming so trapped in our program that we look at each new idea or emphasis to see how it can help our program, instead of asking what our resources can do to forward that concept."

"Tokenism," he continued, "is our curse. Southern Baptists are an energetic and able group, and we've done a little something about many things in seeking to change our world. Tragically, we have often substituted those token efforts for a continuing, concentrated drive which would produce the changes needed. A new slogan, a new emphasis, a new problem catches our attention and we move on."

He enumerated a four-pronged approach to breach the barriers which could blunt the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust goal to reach the world for Christ by the year 2000 and hinder efforts to heed "the desperate cries of humanity." It is: to escape emptiness and meaninglessness, gain freedom from tyranny, achieve order in a day of moral chaos, and solve widespread hunger and starvation.

"First," he declared, "we must pray for spiritual awakening. No programming will do it. Praying is the essential ingredient for this day. Our evangelism awaits it. Our nurture must be bathed in it. Our mission enterprise will be accelerated by it. We must pray...if we are to become part of God's plan instead of God's rejects."

Allen further urged emphasis on church growth which includes the spiritual growth of Christians as well as numerical growth of churches, renewed efforts to close the credibility gap for the gospel of Christ by the way we live, and insistence on "battling with the Bible instead of over the Bible."

"I'm weary of nitpickers and headline hunters predicting schism in the nation's largest evangelical group (the SBC) over authenticity, authority, accuracy and inspiration of the Bible," Allen declared.

"If these folks would join us as a people of the Book, they are welcome. If they are going to spend all their time trying to find the mistakes of judgment which occasionally occur in a group as large and diverse as ours, and try to make a mountain out of every rhetorical mole hill, I say we have too much to do to greet these brethren in the way. The urgency of the command says move on, brother."

The SBC president also reminded denominational leaders to redouble emphasis on "the new force in the Southern Baptist picture--an unprecedented resource in lay persons ready for missions."

He lauded the Mission Service Corps, which would put 5,000 volunteer missionaries on home and foreign mission fields by 1982 to supplement career missions. He said he has a goal that 1,200 to 1,500 of that number will be appointed by the time of the 1979 SBC annual meeting in Houston. (An earlier report inadvertently quoted Allen as setting that goal for the 1978 SBC in Atlanta.)

Allen said "Southern Baptist freedom fighters," striving to set the world free of ills which plague it, must overcome at least four barricades in their efforts--time, territoriality, tokenism and timidity. Only then, he said, can we realize what many feel is an unprecedented moment for outreach in the history of the 13-million-member, 132-year-old denomination.

Allen urged SBC leaders not to kill off dreamers who have a fresh approach to an old idea by saying that it's already been tried and that there's a program statement covering it and a staff member working on it.

And, he said, don't be embarrassed by goals which seem improbable.

"The idea of confronting every person with the claims of Christ by the year 2000 is hopelessly naive," he said. "But it's just like Jesus to do that. He took 12 men, then 120 people, and challenged them to change the nations--going, making disciples of all nations. Visions which result in accomplishment of great things are like that--unrealistic, improbable."

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Annie Armstrong Offering Reaches 95.52 Percent

ATLANTA (BP)--The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions received \$10,745,967 during 1977, or 95.52 percent of its goal of \$11,250,000.

William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, announced final receipts of the offering taken each year by the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union for the support of home missions work in the United States and its territories.

"We could probably say this is the largest offering ever given for home missions anywhere in the world," Tanner said in his report. "This is very encouraging to me. I never cease to be amazed at the way Southern Baptists give."

The 1977 offering is \$1,114,911 more than the amount received in 1976, Tanner said.

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Mayor's Wife Chairs Deacons

LUBBOCK, Tex. (BP)--Second Baptist Church of Lubbock has chosen the city's first lady to chair the executive council of deacons. Mrs. Anita Bass, whose husband Roy is mayor of Lubbock, was one of five women ordained at Second Baptist last year.

This is Bass' second time on the executive council. As chairperson, she hopes to "help the deacons to find meaning and ministry as the ordained." Bass is currently one of four women on the 64-member Southern Baptist Convention Executive Board.

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Georgia Church Ordains Woman

DECATUR, Ga. (BP)--Susan Bishop, a chaplain at Georgia Mental Health Institute, has been ordained at Decatur First Baptist Church. She will also become associate pastor for missions at Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur.

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Bishop, a South Carolinian, is a graduate of Candler School of Theology at Emory University. She is believed to be the eighth woman ordained to the ministry by Georgia Baptist churches.

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Catholics Give \$1,500
To Baptist Church

Baptist Press
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DONGOLA, Ill. (BP)--All the years R. T. Reeves was playing golf with H. G. Downey and, in his words, "engaging in good-natured jostling about the differences in Baptists and Catholics," little did he know this friendship would lead to a \$1,500 gift to the First Baptist Church here.

Reeves, director of the Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative here and a member of First Baptist Church, said Downey was a key figure in recommending a \$1,500 gift to his church on behalf of the Knights of Columbus disaster fund.

Downey, who lives in Mt. Vernon, is the past state Grand Knight of the Catholic organization, which earmarked the \$1,500 for the building fund of the church, which was destroyed by fire on October 15.

"I understand this is the first grant to any organization in southern Illinois by the Catholic disaster fund," Reeves said. "And it's an outright gift, not a loan."

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Graham Voted Most Influential
Personality In U. S. Religion

Baptist Press
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CHICAGO (BP)--Billy Graham has been named the most influential person in the field of religion in the U. S. today in a poll of 35 religion writers and editors taken by The Christian Century magazine.

The ecumenical weekly said "the clear winner, receiving almost unanimous support, is evangelist Billy Graham, described by one writer as 'the one and only.'"

Martin E. Marty, an associate editor of The Christian Century, was second in the poll.

President Jimmy Carter, a Southern Baptist layman, ranked third. The Century quoted one writer as saying he "demonstrates that evangelical religion and politics mix," and another as having written that he "sets the style for the born-again movement--has popularized it so that even hardened newspaper editors are sure there is a revival going on." A third writer said, "He has made civil religion respectable again without losing us in piety."

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Baptist Hour Goes Stereo,
Originates From Bible Lands

Baptist Press
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FORT WORTH (BP)--"The Baptist Hour," a syndicated religious radio show, is to begin broadcasting in stereo and originate from the Bible lands in February as part of an effort to assume real responsibilities in the Southern Baptist Convention's Bold Mission Thrust to present the gospel to everyone in the world by the year 2000.

"Baptist Hour" speaker Frank Pollard, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., spent two weeks in the Bible lands in December with Claude C. Cox, producer, and Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission engineers. The commission syndicates the show on 359 radio stations.

They taped 45 shows at sites which included the Sea of Galilee, Jericho, Jacob's Well, Caesarea, David's Tomb, Lazarus' Tomb, the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, and the Jordan River. A pre-Easter sermon was recorded at the traditional site of the upper room where Jesus shared his last meal with his disciples. The Palm Sunday sermon was taped in the Garden of Gethsemane. Potter's Field and the chapel built where Jesus is believed to have ascended into heaven are sites of the post-Easter sermons.

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Other sermons were taped Masada, where a last remnant of Jewish heroes chose suicide rather than Roman slavery; Megiddo, where some people believe the final battle between good and evil is to be fought; in Nazareth; and the Pater Noster Church in Jerusalem where Jesus gave his disciples the Lord's Prayer.

"We are presenting 'The Baptist Hour' in stereo at the request of the stations who presently air it," said Paul M. Stevens, commission president. "Most of these radio stations have moved from monaural equipment to stereophonic equipment and they have asked us for several years to record our programs in stereo. Until now we have not had the funds to do so."

Stevens said the program can now be offered to more stations who have been unable to use it because it was not in stereo.

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Christopher Pool, Retired
Missionary, Dies at Age 72

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SAN ANGELO, Tex. (BP)--J. Christopher Pool, 72, died unexpectedly at his home here Jan. 21. The former Southern Baptist missionary had served for 38 years in Nigeria and Liberia prior to his retirement in 1972.

The funeral was to be held Jan. 24 at First Baptist Church here with burial the following day at Lockhart, Tex. H. Cornell Goerner, retired area secretary for West Africa for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, was to participate in the funeral on behalf of the board.

Born in Dove, Tex., Jan. 26, 1905, Pool was educated at Baylor University, Waco, Tex.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; and George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn. His wife, Elizabeth Routh, is the sister of Porter Routh, executive secretary-treasurer for the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee in Nashville.

Appointed in 1934, the Pools were stationed for 37 years in Ogbomosho, Nigeria, where he was principal of the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary. During his tenure, the school developed from a three-student institution to one of the largest seminaries in Africa. He spent his last year on the field opening new work in the Nimba area of Liberia.

Survivors include his wife; two daughters, Frances (Mrs. John) Harren of Annandale, Va., and Carolyn (Mrs. Richard L.) Bullington of Centerville, Va.; a son, James C. Jr. of Hawaii; and several grandchildren.

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Tiller Resigns
From BWA Staff

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1/23/78

WASHINGTON (BP)--Carl W. Tiller, a layman associated with the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) either as an officer or staff person since 1956, has resigned in order that, in his words, he may "seek that place of work where Mrs. Tiller and I can be of the largest usefulness to the Kingdom of God."

Tiller, 62, was western treasurer of BWA from 1956 to 1972 in an honorary capacity, while he worked with the U. S. Government. He became associate secretary of BWA in April 1972, at the time of his government retirement.

BWA General Secretary Robert S. Denny expressed appreciation for Tiller's contributions as an associate secretary with responsibility for BWA programs in world relief, in study and research, in the North American Baptist Fellowship, and as an observer at the United Nations and staff person for the organization of International Mission Secretaries. Tiller said one reason for his decision to seek employment outside the BWA is his desire to continue work until the age of 70. The BWA's personnel policy calls for retirement at age 65. The alliance is a fellowship of 109 Baptist conventions and unions with churches in 90 countries. Tiller served his native state of Minnesota for five years before joining the U. S. government in Washington. His 30 years in federal service led to work as chief of budget methods in the Office of Management and Budget. He has been president of the American Baptist Churches in the USA and the American Baptist Peace Fellowship and treasurer of the National Council of Churches. He has held multiple leadership assignments in Washington's Calvary Baptist Church, and has been active also as a volunteer in official positions of the Washington City Bible Society and the American Cancer Society.

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