



**--FEATURES**  
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78-156

Bibles Sent Legally  
Into Soviet Union

By Louis Moore

ATLANTA (BP)--For almost a decade now several groups of Christians in this country have made dramatic headlines with their tales about smuggling Bibles into the Soviet Union.

The groups and individuals involved have told about sneaking copies of the Bible into the Soviet Union in concealed compartments in such things as suitcases, cars and shoes.

Claiming that the Soviet Union will not allow the importation of Bibles, these groups have told about using prayer to get past snoopy guards and about heroic efforts of their members who have been caught crossing into communist countries with the Scriptures.

Now a new group has emerged claiming it has discovered a way to legally ship Bibles into the Soviet Union without all the drama and hullabaloo.

The group is called Bibles for the World. It is based in Wheaton, Ill., but has regional representatives throughout the country. Such well-known American evangelicals as singer Pat Boone, U.S. Rep. John Buchanan and Sherwood Wirt, former editor of Billy Graham's Decision magazine, have loaned their names to the support of the group.

Edwin L. Hodges of Decatur, Ala., a regional representative for Bibles for the World, says the method to legally send Bibles into the Soviet Union was discovered by accident and began two years ago.

Bibles for the World was founded in 1972 by Rochunga Pudaita, an American whose grandfather was a headhunter in India. Pudaita says God has shown him that Bibles should be distributed through the mails to anyone in the world who has his name and address listed in a phone book.

The rationale for the distribution method is this: The key political, social and economic leaders in every country now have phones. Many could be converted to Christianity if they ever had the chance to read the New Testament in their own language. Once these leaders are converted, it will be much easier to convert the rest of the people in a particular country to Christianity.

After the Bibles for the World organization distributed Bibles to everyone with a phone in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Pakistan, the leaders of the group discovered a little known but potent clause in a "Friendship Pact" between one of the completed countries and the Soviet Union.

Hodges will not say which country it is that has the pact, but officials of the Baptist World Alliance in Washington, D.C. understand it is India.

The clause in the pact allows religious materials printed in that country and mailed from there to enter the Soviet Union legally.

After investigating the legality, the group set up a procedure to have Bibles printed in that country in the Soviet languages and then mailed to people listed in Soviet phone books.

Hodges says it costs less than \$2 each to print and mail a New Testament to the Soviet Union, a paltry sum compared to the high cost per copy of Bibles smuggled into the country.

He says as far as his group can determine the Bibles are being delivered to the persons they are addressed to in the Soviet Union. So far about 500,000 copies of the Bibles (New Testament only) have been sent to residents of Moscow. What they have done with the Bibles is not known.

Hodges says Americans do not realize that people in many parts of the world have difficulty obtaining a Bible.

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About 85 percent of the Bibles available are printed in English and only nine percent of the world speaks English, he says.

Hodges says his group has distributed some four million copies of the New Testament since its work began in 1972. The group presently operates on a budget of some \$2.5 million a year. The money is all donated to the organization; the Bibles are distributed free.

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Seminary Names Wood  
Communications Director

Baptist Press  
9/25/78

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Darrell W. Wood, director of communications for the Southern Baptist Education Commission in Nashville, Tenn., will become director of communications at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Oct. 1.

He succeeds J. Michael Duduit, who has been named director of public relations at Palm Beach Atlantic College, West Palm Beach, Fla.

Wood, 39, will also teach courses in journalism and public relations at the seminary.

Before joining the Education Commission, Wood was editor of youth Sunday School materials at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. Previously he directed international student ministries for the Missouri Baptist Convention and served as a missionary to Hong Kong, campus minister at Wichita State University, and communications/promotions specialist, Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists. He has also had newspaper and advertising agency experience.

At various times, Wood has served additionally as an instructor in journalism, advertising, public relations and communications design at Belmont College, Nashville, Tenn., the University of Tennessee at Nashville, the University of Missouri - Columbia and Hong Kong Baptist College.

A native of Oklahoma, Wood earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla., master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and master of arts in journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

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(BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Baptist Press.

Religious Freedom Granted  
In Proposed Constitution

Baptist Press  
9/25/78

MADRID, Spain (BP)--The new Spanish constitution, now before Spain's Congress of Deputies, carries guarantees of religious liberty, according to European Baptist Press Service.

Article 15, recently approved by the Congress, contains these paragraphs:

1. Religious liberty and individual and collective worship is guaranteed as well as the liberty to profess any belief or ideology. This is limited in its outward manifestations only by the need for public order protected by the law.

2. No person can be required to declare his religion, belief or ideology.

3. There will be no state religion. Public authorities, in considering the religious beliefs of Spanish society, will maintain cooperative relations with the Catholic Church and the other confessions.

According to the Paris Bulletin d'Information Protestant (BIP), the special mention of the Catholic Church, finally admitted in the text, led to considerable debate with paragraph 3 being approved by 197 votes and 112 abstentions. Paragraphs 1 and 2 were carried with 312 votes and three abstentions.

Article 25, concerning public education, also was approved, not without tension over the mere recognition, rather than outright guarantee, of private schools.

The constitution must be approved by the Spanish Senate, then by a national referendum, before being proclaimed into law by King Carlos.

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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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September 25, 1978

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WrapupConsultation Focuses  
Pressing Issues

By Johnni Johnson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The local church and the call of God came to the fore repeatedly as the Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations, a first in the Southern Baptist Convention, grappled with the place for women in Christian witness today.

Speaking during the closing session, an Oklahoma churchwoman, Gladys Lewis, and SBC President, Jimmy Allen, of San Antonio, Texas, affirmed the church as the arena and the sense of God's calling as basic for ministry.

"No better laboratory for learning exists than the local church--especially for women," Mrs. Lewis said. "The church is where we begin and end, nurtured to a call to return to minister."

"Nothing can keep anyone from being successful if they are following the call of God," Allen counseled. "No matter their color or gender, the sense of God's calling makes for an undefeatable spirit."

In dialog groups participants summarized the relevance of the consultation and identified issues--those needing attention, those not surfaced during the three-day gathering.

Change is happening, the conferees agreed, and with it must come new definitions, new statements of theological presuppositions, new understandings of roles, opportunities, challenges and responsibilities.

Attention was called to the political processes operative in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Southern Baptist agency heads, while pledging more sensitivity to the professional needs of women, encouraged women to work through traditional channels to get on the boards of these agencies.

A research project conducted for the consultation showed almost 70 percent of the current women's work force in SBC agencies serve with a definite sense that God has called them to that specific job. It also showed 63 percent are convinced "no man would do what I do for the same pay." (Only female employees of the Sunday School Board and Annuity Board did not participate for what the agencies said were legal reasons peculiar to those agencies.)

However, in an unscheduled meeting, about 50 challenged its findings on grounds it did not fully represent views of women in the SBC. They urged that its findings not be released.

At the beginning of each session, Evelyn and Frank Stagg, husband-wife Bible teaching team, focused attention on the situation of women in the world of Jesus. In so doing they spotlighted how to measure women's criteria for handling the Word of God. "The purpose and obligation of anyone who has heard the Word of God is to proclaim it," Stagg said.

In the consultation's opening session, Catherine Allen of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union, consultation chairperson, sounded a clarion call for the denomination's "scrupulous honesty" in educating and guiding young women about their reasonable expectations for Christian service.

Noting the gap between their expectation and job availability, Mrs. Allen said the gap must be bridged or the result would be disastrous for individuals and programs and even the denomination's future.

Ruth Harvey Charity of Danville, Va., a lawyer who specializes in employment discrimination cases involving race and sex, said women often flounder in jobs with inferior pay and prestige because government policies that sound like open doors to equal opportunity are, in practice, opened barely enough for a majority male to enter. "We've got the philosophy, but not the practice."

Andrew Lester, associate professor of psychology of religion at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., described some of the barriers women ministers may expect to encounter.

He included the average man's lack of experience in relating to a women in the role of minister, which creates problems concerning normal sexual attraction; the psychological areas of competition and authority, made more difficult by the cultural myth that women are inferior; the current interest in submissiveness of women; and competition for jobs with both men and women.

A few participants expressed the concern about Baptist representatives who they felt were drifting toward liberal stances.

Mrs. Bobbie Patray of Huntsville, Ala., attending her first national Baptist meeting, said the issues of a woman's role in the church should not be "lumped in" with the issue of professional equality in pay and responsibility.

Another traditionalist view was presented by Willel Reitzer, a Southern Baptist layman from Washington, who defined women's role in one word: subordination. He said, "A man's bad decision is better than a woman's good decision."

Seminary faculty members and presidents, as well as personnel from participating SBC agencies, listened through group discussions, major addresses and presentations coming from these varied points of view.

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Gaines Dobbins, Pioneer  
SBC Educator, Dies at 92

Baptist Press  
9/25/78

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Pioneer Southern Baptist religious educator, Gaines S. Dobbins, 92, died Friday, Sept. 22, of an apparent heart attack at his home in Birmingham.

A native of Langsdale, Miss., Dobbins broke ground as the first Southern Baptist to teach Christian journalism, pastoral care, psychology of religion and church administration. He was on the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., for 36 years and was the seminary's first dean of the school of religious education.

In 1956, he retired and joined the faculty of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., as distinguished professor of church administration. In 1968, Southern Seminary named him emeritus dean of the school of religious education and later established the Gaines S. Dobbins Chair of Church Administration, a permanently endowed professorship.

In 1976, at age 90, Dobbins returned to Southern Seminary to teach in several terms at Boyce Bible School, the seminary's theological training school for ministers without a college degree.

"Dr. Dobbins is one of the most remarkable men I have ever known," said Findley Edge, who succeeded Dobbins as Basil Manly Professor of Religious Education at Southern Seminary. "Although he lived each day to the fullest, he was always looking to the future, seeking to find ways to improving the practical work of the local congregation."

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From the age of 12 until his death, Dobbins considered himself primarily a journalist. A printer's helper at age 12, shop foreman at 17, city editor of the Hattiesburg, Miss., "Saturday Evening Eye" at 19, Dobbins later served for 20 years, in addition to his seminary duties, as editor of "Home and Foreign Fields," predecessor of the SBC's present missions magazines.

Before joining the seminary, Dobbins spent brief periods as a pastor and college teacher and four years as an associate editor at the SBC Sunday School Board.

A prolific writer, Dobbins authored 32 books and was working on another until the time of his death. His most recent book, "Zest for Living," was published in 1977 and was written when Dobbins was 90.

He is said to have written more Sunday School lesson expositions, more Training Union programs, and more articles dealing with religious education than any other person.

A graduate of Mississippi College, Dobbins received his Ph.D. degree from Southern Seminary in 1914. He later received a masters degree from Columbia University.

Funeral services for Dobbins were Monday, Sept. 25, at the Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, where he was an active member involved in teacher training and pastoral care.

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Women at the Consultation:

Why They Came, How They Feel

By Jerilynn Wood and Barbara White

Baptist Press

9/25/78

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--"I have the education and the calling but no job," said Bonnie Hicks of Bluefield, Va.

"It's so frustrating to educationally prepare your self and then have nowhere to go," said Bonny Dillon of Louisville, Ky.

"I like and appreciate men and their gifts, but I'd like to have a little room to express myself too," said Len Sehested of Fort Worth, Texas.

Approximately 300 women and men from 25 states and 11 Southern Baptist agencies came to Nashville for the first national Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations. Some came out of curiosity, others to voice complaints, and many to find direction.

A major concern of many participants working for Southern Baptist agencies was the vocational opportunities open to women.

"As the executive director of the Woman's Missionary Union in North Carolina, I am having to ask myself if I can continue encouraging young women and girls to pursue employment in church-related vocations when so many doors are closed," said Nancy Curtis of Raleigh.

"I am an associate professor at Southern Seminary and work with a large number of young women seeking a Christian vocation and facing dim prospects of finding employment," said Anne Davis of Louisville, Ky.

"In my position, the discrimination I face is really frustrating," said Abigail Carlisle, Southern Seminary student, Louisville, Ky. "Southern Baptists are committed to Bold Mission Thrust and are emphasizing the need to start new churches. I feel called into this type of work but have been told that this vocation is closed to me, at least for the time being."

"I have experienced having doors closed," Mrs. Hicks said. "When my husband and I graduated from seminary in 1977 the seminary job placement service sent my resume to two or three places while my husband's was sent to more than 30. I feel called and best suited for the pastorate, but I am now looking into the possibility of serving on a church staff or going into a counseling service."

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Participants from different backgrounds, education, and positions gathered here, each hoping the consultation would provide answers for themselves, their churches, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

As the meeting closed on Friday, many people left encouraged and with the hope this meeting would not "be the end of it."

"This was very exciting, but I wasn't surprised," said Pattisue Smith of Oklahoma. "I hope it will have an affect on more than just the people here."

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Ordained Woman Says People  
Should Fulfill Personhood

By Connie Davis

Baptist Press  
9/25/78

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--When Sue Fitzgerald first went into church work nearly 25 years ago, ordination for women was not an issue. But in 1972 her church asked her if they could ordain her.

"I had been doing a minister's work as minister of education," said Ms. Fitzgerald. "The people in my church thought for a long time that I was already ordained. Many of the people asked me to ask for ordination.

"When the church is ready for it, this is when it is important," continued Ms. Fitzgerald, director of the Center for Christian Education Ministries, Mars Hill (N.C.) College. "Ordination is a fulfillment of a woman's ministry with people."

"It was not so much that it started something for me. I was already a minister. Ordination did entitle me to perform weddings. But I was already ministering," she emphasized.

"I feel a person must first be the person God made, and then take on the position God gives," she said. "And each person must find the position that will fulfill their personhood."

She has no problems with whether it is "right" for women to want to be in the pastoral ministry. "The commission is for us to go. I have to follow my own drumbeat, but I have to follow it in rhythm with the people with whom I work. This applies to men too," she continued.

Ms. Fitzgerald feels she was called to ministry but that it was a developing one. "My first church was in 1953. Since then I have felt God leading me each step of the way," she said. "I do not think God maps out lives, or at least not mine. I think it would have frightened me then to think I would be doing what I'm doing now. The whole concept of the ministry has grown for me. It has been very exciting," she said.

She believes each person has to find the right way to minister. "It may not be exactly what that person would choose at the moment. I have to be the unique me that I am. It is up to me to develop the whole that I am rather than fill a role that is prescribed by someone else. And what I'm saying is not so much for females as it is for everybody.

"The church has to do more thinking about ordination and what it means," she concluded. "We have in the past thought that ordination related only to the preaching ministry--but we need to think about ministry as a whole."

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Consultation Participants  
Told To 'Awake, Arise'

By Judy Touchton

Baptist Press  
9/25/78

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Creating power, accepting power and using power--this is the key to women arising to their abilities and awakening to their potential, participants in the Southern Baptist Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations were told.

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For those statements Gladys S. Lewis of Midwest City, Okla., freelance writer, trustee at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and former foreign missionary, received a standing ovation. "We all exert power in some form. Determining the relationship between the creation, crucible and the crusade for power is the key," Mrs. Lewis said.

Using the biblical reference of Judges 4 and 5, the story of Deborah, Mrs. Lewis challenged participants to "Awake, Deborah! Arise!" to use power. The vehicle for obtaining power and using power is the local church, she said. "No better laboratory for learning exists than the local church--especially for women," she said. "The church is where we begin and end, nurtured to a call to return to minister."

She said power is awakened in women first through doing small tasks well within the local church. "But what we do with that power must be in a priority scale among church, self and our Father," she said.

Mrs. Lewis, who went through a time of risk and tension when her church refused to allow her to become a deacon, said her personal injury lay at the principle involved--that she is a woman. Yet, she insisted, "If you go out from here and bad-mouth my church, I'll follow you and track you down...as in a Sherlock Holmes novel...and sue you for libel."

She said in the past power of women was defined in relation to men. Women must define their power in relation to God first or ultimately it is not her power," she said.

Touching on the issue of ordination, she characterized it as "symbol of acceptance of power."

"Two ways of success in ministry are recognized in Baptist churches: ordination and being given harder jobs to do. Ordination is a positive symbol for those ordained. When it is withheld, it holds a negative connotation," she said.

Often the choice for women, she said, is "somewhere between being a martyr and being martyred. She cannot win." Her solution to this dilemma was the "age old solution--time."

Meanwhile, she said, "Christ gives me worth, renews my vision...provides power...with love. Awake, men and women, arise, to the challenge."

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Baptist Layman Espouses  
Traditionalist Views

By Connie Davis

Baptist Press  
9/25/78

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--"In one word, the role of a woman is subordination," a registrant of the Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations said.

Willel Reitzer, a southern Baptist layman from Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D. C., attended the consultation to present his viewpoint.

His viewpoint is "the traditionalist viewpoint," said the graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary, an interdenominational seminary. Reitzer handed out mimeographed copies of his viewpoints to consultation registrants.

"This consultation is essentially feminist," Reitzer declared. "What disturbs me is that it is supported by the hierarchy, and the traditionalist viewpoint is not being presented."

He said ordination for women is against all the Bible teaches. "Women are to be silent in the church. A woman is not called to the ordained ministry," he said.

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Reitzer sees a woman as having a role in three areas: the home, church, and society. But in all three areas, woman must be subordinate to man, he said. "There are many ways a woman can serve the Lord through good works. In the church she should be involved in charitable activities," Reitzer said.

Asked what responsibilities a woman could assume in the church, Reitzer said a woman could be a church secretary or other things. "It is a question of authority. If a woman is exerting authority over a man, or ordering a man around, it is wrong. A man's authority should not be challenged by a person of another gender," Reitzer said.

"A man's bad decision," is better than a woman's good decision, Reitzer said, noting that subordination has a divine example. Man is subject to the earth and to God, so he is subject to authority just like the woman is, he said.

"This subordination does not present for a woman a lack of fulfillment. This is the way God planned it," he said. "There is more virtue to be gained for a woman in a subordinate role. In Heaven, women may have a greater reward than men because they choose to be subordinate."

Reitzer offers another Biblical support for the subordinate role of women: "When Eve misbehaved in the Garden she showed that women have an inherent weakness that is built into womanhood."

He also spoke against Woman's Missionary Union. "This women's movement started at WMU. The women's organizations started to encroach on the work of the church when they started asking to be on church councils and to be involved in decision-making."

Asked if he had found a woman who measured up to his standards, Reitzer said he had committed himself to celibacy.





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