



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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### Wrapup

Baptist Conventions Mix  
Harmony and Debate

By Robert O'Brien

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptists, gathering in annual sessions across the nation, approved goals and promised resources to escalate the Southern Baptist Convention's ambitious Bold Mission Thrust goal to proclaim Christ's message to the entire world in this century.

That common thread wove together the deliberations of 33 currently organized conventions covering work in 50 states and the organizational meeting of the Nevada Area Baptist Convention, which will begin operation Jan. 1, 1979, with churches previously affiliated with the California and Arizona conventions.

While the convention sessions emphasized mission outreach and harmony, they did have their share of debates on such issues as doctrine, educational institutions, matters of Baptist polity and a wide range of resolutions.

And several state conventions dealt with retirement issues.

One, Arizona, gave a number of gifts to retiring executive director, Roy F. Sutton, 70. They include a \$300 a month retirement supplement for the lifetime of him and Mrs. Sutton because, a convention spokesman said, Sutton's retirement income would have been only 31.5 percent of his pre-retirement income.

Another convention, Ohio, called for "a moving toward adequate retirement provisions for all Southern Baptist church and convention employees on a fair and equitable basis."

That was part of a resolution, passed by a vote of 73 to 63, which said the SBC Executive Committee unwisely used Cooperative Program funds by voting recently to add \$500 per month to the retirement income of its chief executive, Porter W. Routh, who will retire at age 68, Aug. 1, 1979, after 28 years in the post. The resolution was sparked by an editorial by Kentucky editor, C. R. Daley, one of three Baptist editors to question use of the funds.

"The Executive Committee took that action," said Charles L. Harvey, chairman of the committee handling details of Routh's retirement, "because Dr. Routh's annuity would have amounted only to 38 percent of his final pre-retirement income."

"Our committee," the former Executive Committee chairman told Baptist Press, "realized, after careful study, that the small retirement benefit was far insufficient. There was no effort on our part to take this action as an honor to Dr. Routh, even though he deserves honor, but to compensate for the dereliction on our part to establish an adequate retirement program in years gone by."

"The retirement committee would concur with the principle that no provision should be made for additional pension from Cooperative Program funds to honor or reward executives who have been provided a recommended adequate retirement program," Harvey said. "However, we would encourage churches, state conventions, and Southern Baptist Convention agencies to provide an adequate program based on a 10 percent participation on the salary, which would result in at least 50 percent of final pre-retirement income."

In other matters, doctrinal issues confronted several state conventions.

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NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

In Georgia, messengers at first approved and then reconsidered and refused an effort to require colleges to publish a list of the affiliations of non-Baptist faculty. They also affirmed the authority of trustees of colleges to deal with such matters as requiring professors to sign the Baptist Faith and Message, a statement of faith passed by the 1963 SBC, and refused to take a stand on ordination of women because it is "solely a local church matter."

In the Northwest Convention, which covers Oregon and Washington, messengers deleted the convention's current statement of faith, which churches must sign for affiliation, and replaced it by the statement of Baptist Faith and Message. The old statement required acceptance of persons baptized only by "a New Testament Baptist Church." The Baptist Faith and Message calls only for baptism of believers by immersion without mention of the church in which baptism occurred.

In a similar action, California Baptists, after failing by 20 votes on the first effort for a two-thirds majority, voted 469 to 179 to delete a constitutional provision imposing penalties on churches accepting "alien immersions" and practicing open communion.

South Carolina Baptists, who elected a woman as first vice president, voted 352 to 309 to authorize a study of the role of women in the churches after a debate.

Arkansas Baptists, who voted to oppose ordination of women at the 1977 convention, refused to report a similar resolution out of committee this year on grounds last year's vote had spoken on the matter.

In Missouri, messengers ruled a motion against ordination of women out of order because it would interfere with local church autonomy but did pass, after considerable debate, a motion which resolved to "exhort," rather than demand, the convention's four colleges to "preserve doctrinal integrity."

The motion said they were to do this by employing or continuing to employ professors who believe "in the inspiration of the whole Bible, the inerrancy of the original manuscripts, the existence of a personal Devil and a literal Hell, the actual existence of a primeval couple named Adam and Eve, the literal occurrence of the miracles as recorded in the Bible, the virgin birth and bodily resurrection, and the personal return of the Lord Jesus."

An action on the University of Richmond by Virginia Baptists also touched on doctrinal concerns.

They narrowly defeated, by a vote of 606 to 434, an effort to withdraw Cooperative Program support from the university, as opponents cited their opposition to biblical interpretation by a university professor, Robert Alley, and campus lifestyle.

Alley, a tenured professor, resigned his chairmanship of the department of religion during a controversy surrounding statements he made last year about the divinity of Jesus. He was transferred to another area and no longer teaches religion courses. He reportedly had told a group of atheists that "Jesus never really claimed to be God or to be related to him."

Campus lifestyle allegations referred to policies of the university to allow students to drink alcoholic beverages in designated areas, although the university does not advocate such consumption, and to allow visitation of opposite sexes in dormitory rooms under specified conditions.

The University of Richmond opposition was part of an agenda by an unidentified but obviously organized group seeking to control actions of the convention, although the university controversy is broader than any particular group.

In North Carolina, messengers barely approved, 1,276 to 1,048, a study of whether the university's status should be changed. It was sparked by a university request that it be allowed to elect its own trustees, possibly including some non-Baptists and out-of-state residents.

North Carolina General Secretary Cecil A. Ray and the convention's general board, interpreting approval of such a request as tantamount to severance, favored a study of the proposal based on the concept of severance.

However, messengers approved a substitute motion, urging the study, but doing so under the interpretation that approval would not sever the relationship but only alter it to affiliate status.

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#### Wrapup

Hunger Convocation Presses  
Denomination for Action

By David R. Wilkinson

RIDGECREST, N. C. (BP)-- Upheld by a commonly shared sense of urgency, 250 Southern Baptists grappled with potential solutions to an age old problem during the first Southern Baptist Convocation on World Hunger.

Participants committed themselves to intense personal involvement and, through a dozen recommendations, urged the denomination to step up church efforts to cope with world hunger before adjourning the two-day meeting at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

In a strongly worded statement, which drew some sharp criticism for its "negative tone," the group approved a recommendation calling upon the nation's 13-million Southern Baptists "to confess our corporate guilt" and to adopt simpler lifestyles. "Our lifestyles, our buildings, our budgets stand in judgment against us," the recommendation stated.

Although such recommendations do not bind any individual, church or organization, convocation chairman W. David Sapp of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission said they will be forwarded to appropriate agencies.

Meanwhile, at least eight state Baptist conventions, holding annual meetings around the country just before the convocation, passed resolutions urging Southern Baptists to inform themselves and take decisive action to combat world hunger. The resolutions included call for support of the SBC's World Hunger Day, Aug. 1, 1979, gifts through the SBC Foreign Mission Board and commendation for the convocation.

Seven major speakers, representing a wide range of hunger-related interests and organizations, addressed convocation participants who came from 20 states to the pre-Thanksgiving meeting.

In the keynote message, U. S. Rep. John B. Anderson, R-Ill., charged that Americans "are victims of their own affluence." The nation's ability to produce has dulled its perception of a hungry world, he said.

"As a humanitarian nation, we must do our part and increase our share of giving so the world will not go hungry, fomenting unrest and making a ripe field for those who would spread anarchy and discord," Anderson said.

Several speakers stressed the importance of political action on behalf of the world's hungry.

Arthur Simon, executive director of Bread for the World, and Ron Sider, author of "Rich Christians in Age of Hunger," contended that the religious community's silence on public policy has contributed to hunger.

"Do everything you can think of on the issue of hunger, but neglect public policy, and you have a formula for failure," Simon said. Hunger relief efforts, both private and public, are "never enough," he claimed, "even if you multiply by 100 times what you are doing."

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Sider, an advocate of simple lifestyle, said public involvement must be backed by private integrity. "It's a farce to ask Washington to legislate what Christians refuse to live," he said.

Jimmy Allen, Southern Baptist Convention president, expanded on Christians' responsibility to a hungry world in the closing address.

"It's easy to defend social ministry," he said. "It's easy to have compassion for a hungry child. The difficult thing is to translate it into social action...to political action, to the systems of society, the conscience of the people."

In presenting the biblical and theological basis for the right-to-food concept, Southern Baptist theologian Francis DuBose charged, "Christians' pious justification of the neglect of the hungry millions in the name of spirituality is a facade. Our real problem is indifference...conscious neglect which the Bible can only call sin."

Outlining the role of private volunteer organizations, Midge Meinertz, assistant to the executive director of Church World Service for Development, said any successful approach to world hunger should incorporate an understanding of the complexity of the world and the climate in which hunger-related projects must develop.

"Hunger thrives on the powerlessness of political naivete," she asserted. "No matter what form you choose to take in the accelerated fight against hunger, changes in world conditions will affect results."

Economist James P. Grant, president of the Overseas Development Council, said the basic problem facing the world's undeveloped and underdeveloped nations is not hunger itself, but the poverty which dooms people to hunger. He said, however, that the United States has the ability to "break the back" of world hunger.

Other recommendations adopted during the meeting called for more Southern Baptist involvement in hunger-related political action groups and development of educational programs emphasizing biblical, practical dimensions of world hunger.

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#### Convocation Pushes Action On World Hunger Issues

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Stirred by a proposal which urged Southern Baptists "to confess our corporate guilt," participants in a convocation on world hunger approved a dozen recommendations calling for increased involvement in world hunger concerns.

"Our lifestyles, our buildings, our budgets, stand in judgment against us," read the most-debated proposal of the two-day meeting sponsored by eight Southern Baptist Convention agencies. Simpler lifestyles should be encouraged, the recommendation added, to provide more money and energy for hunger relief and food development.

Two other recommendations encouraged Southern Baptists to become involved in political action groups related to world hunger, such as Bread for the World, and specifically asked the denomination's Christian Life Commission and Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs to join the Interreligious Task Force on U. S. Food Policy.

Other recommendations called for:

--Development of a complete and coordinated educational program involving all agencies, emphasizing the biblical, theological and practical dimensions of world hunger. The recommendation specifically encouraged the Sunday School department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board to plan a three-month unit in 1981-82 on Christian responsibility related to world hunger and economic justice;

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--Formation of a coordinating body of SBC agency representatives with responsibilities in hunger concerns, possibly with the addition of staff;

--Establishment of a Southern Baptist Convention-wide miss-a-meal program for world hunger;

--Shifting the denomination's annual World Hunger Day observance from Wednesday to a "prominent" Sunday;

--An added emphasis in Bold Mission Thrust, the denomination's goal to evangelize the world by the year 2000, on "Bold Living" for the year 1980-81, including challenges from SBC agencies to Southern Baptists through a series of hunger projects;

--Development of a comprehensive domestic hunger program by the denomination;

--Appointment of more missionaries with skills in health and family planning and agriculture;

--Commendation of President Jimmy Carter for the recent establishment of a Presidential Commission on World Hunger;

--Churches to establish world hunger committees and observe World Hunger Day.

Strong unity was evident among the 250 participants as they resoundingly approved every proposal that came from the 19 workgroups after paring by a screening committee. The only major dissent came from those who were reluctant to assume "corporate guilt" for the 13-million members of the nation's largest evangelical body.

Grady Cothen, president of the Sunday School Board, who moderated the session, reminded the participants that the recommendations would be published and forwarded to the appropriate agencies but they were not binding on any individual church or agency.

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Spirituality Facade  
In Face of Hunger

Baptist Press  
11/22/78

RIDGECREST, N. C. (BP)--Modern Christianity's "pious justification of the neglect of the hungry millions in the name of spirituality is a facade," a Baptist theologian claimed at a Southern Baptist Convocation on World Hunger.

"Our real problem is conscious neglect which the Bible can only call sin," said Francis DuBose, professor of missions at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. "Jesus Christ was the epitome of love and his beautiful life sits in judgment upon our indifference to the stark phenomenon of world hunger."

"Moreover, when we link this pious justification with the typical middle class contempt for the poor," DuBose added, "we not only place ourselves clearly outside the biblical tradition, but we reflect spiritual blindness. The Bible makes it clear that this kind of neglect is oppressive. It is tyranny--and all in the name of spirituality."

DuBose offered biblical and theological bases for the right to food to the 250 predominantly Southern Baptists gathered before Thanksgiving. He received a standing ovation for his address, which was sprinkled liberally with hunger-related passages from the Old and New Testaments.

"What the Bible says and implies on the subject no doubt would totally revolutionize our thinking and our lifestyles if we took its message seriously," he said. "If we do not respond seriously and radically, how can we continue to call ourselves Christians?"

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Rich Must Live Simply So  
The Poor May Simply Live

By Norman Jameson

RIDGECREST, N. C. (BP)--The drastic division between rich and poor has perched the world's population on the brink of catastrophe, claimed an advocate of simpler lifestyle at a national hunger conference.

Ron Sider, author of "Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger," said the world "desperately needs sweeping structural changes."

"We must demand a foreign policy that unequivocally sides with the poor," Sider told 250 participants at the Southern Baptist Convocation on World Hunger. "If we truly believe that all people are created equal, then our foreign policy must be redesigned to promote the interests of all people and not just the wealthy elites in developing countries or our own multi-national corporations."

Sider said the U. S. should wield its economic and diplomatic strength to push for change in dictatorships where torture is common. He also advocated sending foreign aid only to countries committed to improving the lot of their poor.

"We should openly encourage nonviolent movements working for structural change in developing countries," Sider said. "U. S. foreign policy ought to encourage justice rather than injustice."

But Sider, associate professor of theology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, put the largest burden of example on the Christian community, saying, "It's a farce to ask Washington to legislate what Christians refuse to live."

"Christians in the United States spent \$5.7 billion on new church construction alone in the six years from 1967-72," he said. "Would we go on building lavishly furnished, expensive church plants and adding air conditioning and new pipe organs if members of our own congregations were starving?"

"By the lifestyles we live, the church buildings we construct and the politicians we elect, we demonstrate clearly that we are on the side of the rich," Sider said. "Right at the center of biblical teaching is the explosive message that God is at work in history to pull down the unjust rich and elevate the poor for the sake of justice."

The Ontario native quoted Catholic Elizabeth Seton, who said, "The rich must live more simply than the poor may simply live."

To live more simply, Sider suggested that individuals move to a lifestyle that could be sustained over a long period if everyone in the world lived at that level; distinguish between necessities and luxury; spend no money for status, pride or fashion; spend to develop creative gifts and legitimate hobbies but not for all the cultural items, recreational equipment and current hobbies that the "successful enjoy"; and distinguish between occasional celebration and normal day-to-day routine.

Today's god is the standard of living and the ad man is its prophet, Sider maintained. "It is not possible for isolated believers to resist the anti-Christian values which pour forth from our radios, TVs and billboards," Sider said.

Sider proposed a 10-year plan to his predominantly Southern Baptist audience that would focus denominational leadership on the structural causes of world hunger and would promote widespread constituency involvement in change.

He advised a strategy that would put new emphasis on prayer; new educational curriculum which focuses on justice; multi-media programs to expose systemic injustice; and hundreds of teams to give justice workshops in colleges, churches and seminaries.

"But many of our people do not want to hear the prophets' call against systemic injustice," Sider declared. "They are more willing to hear the call for Christmas baskets."



At 100, Emeritus Missionary  
Still Busy Doing Lord's Work

By Ruth Fowler

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)--Reaching 100 is no excuse to quit doing the Lord's work, Lelah C. Morgan believes.

Mrs. Morgan, who reached the century mark Nov. 18, plans to keep right on going with her ministry of intercessory prayer.

Southern Baptists' oldest living emeritus missionary received a special plaque and flowers on her birthday from the Foreign Mission Board, which proclaimed Nov. 18 as a "special day of honor" for her.

But she didn't allow the acknowledgements to interrupt her daily prayers for mission work, Southern Baptist leaders, and especially for seminary and college professors who teach young ministers. A tiny woman of great energy, Mrs. Morgan has a sharp mind, and a keen desire to grow in her relationship with God.

Mrs. Morgan is convinced that prayer is the greatest ministry she and other retired missionaries can have. She appealed strongly to resigned and retired missionaries at a recent meeting to use their presence to stimulate greater prayer support for foreign missions in their churches.

Mrs. Morgan and her late husband, Edgar, left as missionaries to China shortly after their marriage in 1905. They served there 27 years before retiring in 1932. Later, she spent 20 years as a leader of Bible conferences and prayer retreats before she "retired" for the second time in 1953.

They served with Lottie Moon, who Mrs. Morgan says would be both embarrassed and amazed at all the attention she has received. She recalls Miss Moon, for whom Southern Baptists' annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions is named, as an unusual woman, but adds that the strength of her work was in her service to an unusual God, a God who knew her and knew how to best use her talents.

Another of her colleagues in China is the only other former Southern Baptist missionary to pass 100. Mary Anderson of Mobile, Ala., was 100-years-old Oct. 24. But because she resigned after 13 years in China to return to the states with her elderly aunt, and didn't retire, Mrs. Morgan is considered the oldest living emeritus missionary.

Service in China was a family affair for the Morgans. Mrs. Morgan's sister and brother-in-law served with her in China. Her son, Carter, and his wife are now Southern Baptist missionaries in Hong Kong.

Mrs. Morgan remembers many times from her years in mission work when she feels that God miraculously intervened to protect her from harm. One particularly harrowing experience came as she rode a small tugboat back to rejoin her husband in Tsingtao in north China after a rest leave in another part of the country. As crew members bailed out water that threatened to sink the little boat in a winter storm, Mrs. Morgan had assurance that "God wouldn't let that little tug sink because he had a child on it."

Mrs. Morgan maintains that closeness to God she felt on the tugboat. "I keep the line open," she said. "He knows I'm going to talk to Him. I don't have to introduce myself. I pray all day long--even through my daily duties. I can pray as well when I am scraping carrots as any other time."

Mrs. Morgan, a widow since 1965, makes her home with her daughter Constance, a schoolteacher. An active woman, she keeps house, cooks and cares for flowers, but her primary interest is still the work of Christ. Different women come and pray with her every day, and she maintains a correspondence ministry.

And what of the future? Mrs. Morgan says she is still "not satisfied" with her prayer life and she would like to reach out to more people with the message of salvation.

No matter how many times they retire, some missionaries just never quit working.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press.

Four Baptist Colleges  
Receive Federal Grants

Baptist Press  
11/22/78

WASHINGTON (BP)--Four Southern Baptist schools have been awarded grants under a federal program designed to help students secure employment in their major field of study during their college years.

The four grants, totaling \$117,735, were awarded to Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Okla., (\$37,535), Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., (\$35,814), Belmont College, Nashville, Tenn., (\$22,300), and Meredith College, Raleigh, N. C. (\$22,086).

In all, nearly \$15 million was designated to 316 colleges and universities, both public and private.

The awards were made under the Cooperative Education Program administered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). According to a news release from the large federal agency, participating schools arrange with outside employers to hire students during their college careers, thereby allowing students to alternate periods of academic study with periods of related employment.

According to HEW, the funds are not disbursed directly to the students, but to the schools for administration of the program, training purposes, or research projects. One stipulation attached to the grants is that a school may not receive funds under the Cooperative Education Program for more than five years.

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Relief Funds Help Repair  
Hospital Hit By Rockets

By Frances Fuller

Baptist Press  
11/22/78

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--A gift from Southern Baptist relief funds has enabled a Christian charity hospital in Beirut to open and receive surgery patients six weeks after being hit by seven rockets.

Members of the Lebanon Baptist Mission (organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in the country) provided 5,000 Lebanese lira (\$1,700) and manpower to help the Christian Medical Center repair a hole in the roof, patch a wall of the operating room, replace necessary windows and rebuild the sterilizing room.

The hospital is operated by Dr. Peter Manoogian, an Armenian Lebanese. He and his American wife are members of the University Baptist Church in Beirut.

The gift was part of 27,000 Lebanese Lira (\$9,300) distributed in November by the mission's relief committee to repair war damage and assist needy families. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board allocated the money from funds contributed by Southern Baptists.

Eight thousand Lebanese lira were given to the Badaro Street Baptist Church in Furn es Shebbak to help repair damage caused by three shells during the first week in October. Two thousand Lebanese lira were designated for the repair of a pastor's automobile, hit by shrapnel.

The remaining 12,000 Lebanese lira were divided among 19 needy families, most of whom have no work because of the war. The largest sum was given to a family whose breadwinner was among the civilians who died in Hadath, a Southern suburb of Beirut. All of the aid to families was distributed through Baptist churches.

The Lebanese social affairs minister reports that one million people, one-third of the population, are without either a home or work and 60,500 homes have been destroyed in fighting this year.

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Frances (Mrs. J. Wayne) Fuller is the Southern Baptist missionary press representative in Lebanon.

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