



News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

# -- FEATURES

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79-159

Baker James Cauthen--First  
And Always Called To Preach

By Ruth Fowler

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The face of the 69-year-old administrator was transformed. Baker James Cauthen became a young man again, caught up in the memory of his surrender to preach 53 years ago.

God has used Cauthen not only as a preacher, but as a teacher, a missionary in China, and for the past 26 years as executive director of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. But the call to be a preacher-pastor has remained basic in Cauthen's life.

With shining eyes, Cauthen recalled the Baptist pastor who believed in the abilities and the call of the 16-year-old boy from Lufkin, Texas. As the boy Cauthen grew, that feeling of being believed-in became more important.

"Somehow, when people believed in me, it seemed to be something that would stimulate me, turn me on, make me have a feeling of great responsibility," he reflected.

Now, looking toward his retirement at the end of 1979, Cauthen still sees his years of Christian service from a pastor's perspective. "I've always had the concept that being a pastor is a basic thing in any kind of service for the Lord," Cauthen says. "Always, whether as a missionary on the field or later in the responsibilities of administration, I've said in my heart, 'Be a pastor.'"

The pastor's touch is most evident at the appointment of new missionaries when Cauthen gives them each words of encouragement related to their personal testimonies and a charge to do God's work.

"So much is dependent upon the person's heart commitment as he goes," Cauthen says. "And therefore if you can help to strengthen that commitment and to refine that idealism in the heart of each individual standing on the platform to be appointed, it may be something that will be cherished throughout the remainder of his life."

In recent years he has watched and advised as committed missionaries served and struggled through wars in Africa and the Middle East, times of famine and hunger in Africa and Asia, and growing governmental limitations to work in communist countries of Eastern Europe.

But he has been somewhat disappointed in the numbers of Southern Baptists making themselves available for mission service.

"We have never been able to appoint more than 25 percent of the number of missionaries that are urgently requested from all over the world," Cauthen says. "These are needed missionary personnel whom people have prayed for, whom people have longed for; if they were available they would be so warmly welcome and would have work to do that would be challenging."

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Financial limitations also have been a concern to Cauthen.

"Foreign missions has been like fighting a great runaway fire in the city, with nothing but a garden hose to fight it," Cauthen says. "A great emergency, a great need, but a very limited supply."

With an edge of urgency in his voice, Cauthen talks about the needs of the people of the world. "I do not believe I could express adequately what I believe lies as a potential for Southern Baptists if we do what God wants done, if we really will lash ourselves to the Great Commission and let it command us.

"If we do this, really do this, we may discover that God will use us beyond anything we've ever seen or anything we've ever imagined. God's concern for the peoples of the world is far beyond our concern."

In the context of all he believes about the power and love of God, Cauthen sees Bold Mission Thrust objectives to proclaim the gospel of Jesus to the entire world by the year 2000, as real possibilities.

"There are two things that are going to be absolutely essential," Cauthen says of the expansion of Southern Baptist missions. "One is that there must be the power of God resting upon us. This means we must have the challenge of intercessory prayer. We must go into the depths of prayer, both individually and as a denomination, beyond anything we've ever experienced."

"Also, all Christian people must pick up and do what God has committed to them. We must say 'come' to all our fellow Christians; whoever you are, find your way to do whatever God lays upon your heart to do."

Cauthen has faced similar challenges during his terms as area secretary and executive at the Foreign Mission Board. He faced the challenge of keeping the board out of debt and the problem of knowing where to send limited people and money in the same way he calls upon Southern Baptists to meet the new goals of Bold Mission Thrust--through dependence on God.

Unprecedented growth occurred during the Cauthen years. At the close of 1953, when Cauthen assumed administration of the board, Southern Baptists had 908 missionaries in 32 countries. Today there are 2,977 in 94 countries.

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, an indicator of Southern Baptists' financial commitment to foreign missions, has increased from almost \$3.3 million in 1953 to \$35.9 million in 1978. The number of local members in overseas churches has also increased dramatically, from 214,767 in 1953 to over one million in 1979.

Before Cauthen and his wife, Eloise, left for China in 1939 to be missionaries on the field where she grew up, he was a missions professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. After his retirement he will return to teaching for at least one semester at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., where he will be a guest professor in the newly created Baker James Cauthen chair of missions.

Cauthen gives great credit to Eloise. "She's a wonderfully profound Christian and I have admiration for her that is far beyond any capacity of mine to express," he says. "Her life has been one of the most powerful influences in my life, in my thinking, and in my own spiritual life."

Mrs. Cauthen's role has never been more vital than during the last two years. First a heart attack and then a lengthy case of shingles almost incapacitated the executive. But he came back with determination.

During the long recuperations he kept in touch with work at the Foreign Mission Board. His wife would read memos and correspondence to him when he could not read and he insisted that work be brought to him at home when he could not go to the office.

Cauthen's personal enjoyment comes in long walks along the river with Eloise, lively games of dominoes with friends, and, of course, in preaching.

It is Cauthen the preacher that will be best remembered by Southern Baptists. Always, the message is evangelical, centering around the lost and what Southern Baptists are called to do.

And if this man who has done so much could choose what Southern Baptists will remember him for, it would be this: that he so thoroughly believed and sought to communicate the missions message that it became contagious in Southern Baptist life.

He may have done just that.

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A two-page photo layout, including a possible cover photo, is being mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press.

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Pastors to Receive  
'Missions Digest'

Baptist Press  
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MEMPHIS (BP)--Five Southern Baptist Convention organizations have combined efforts to produce "Missions Digest," a new monthly missions publication to be sent free to nearly 35,000 pastors.

The four-page digest, published by the Brotherhood Commission, Home and Foreign Mission Boards, Sunday School Board and Woman's Missionary Union, will be a quick reference and update of the latest missions resources published by the five agencies.

"Missions Digest" will aid pastors with mission sermon helps, mission quotes, short- and long-range planning ideas, brief mission features for use in church bulletins and news letters, regularly updated missions facts and a comprehensive listing of just-published or soon-to-be published missions information from throughout the world.

"Missions Digest" is a project of the Missions Education Council, established by the five agencies in response to the Missions Challenge Report adopted by the 1976 Southern Baptist Convention in Norfolk, Va.

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## BAPTIST PRESS

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Parochial Schools: Gathering  
Momentum in the SBC?

By David Wilkinson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Christian school movement which swept many Protestant denominations during the early 1970s appears to be gathering quiet but growing support in the Southern Baptist Convention, a denomination long known for its strong advocacy of public education.

Statistics are hard to come by, but a 1976 study by the SBC Sunday School Board found 189 schools associated with Southern Baptist churches, operating in 94 associations, with an estimated enrollment of 38,000 to 40,000 students in grades 1-12. A "calculated guess" for 1979, says Bob Couch, church administration consultant in weekday education for the board, is "in the neighborhood of 300" schools, with some 50,000 students. The SBC has 35,400 churches.

Other indications that Southern Baptist support for parochial education is gathering momentum include the following developments:

--The Sunday School Board now publishes age-graded Bible curriculum designed for Christian schools and conducts seminars on Christian school administration. "Our basic philosophy is that the Christian school is a ministry of the church and since the school is under the umbrella of the church, the Sunday School Board feels a responsibility to assist this ministry," explains Ralph McIntyre, director of the board's church and staff support division.

--A Southern Baptist Christian School Rally held during the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston this summer attracted about 300 persons interested in Christian schools.

--Southern Baptists boast the largest Christian elementary and secondary school system in the nation in Briarcrest Baptist School System in Memphis, owned and operated by East Park Baptist Church. Many Christian school enthusiasts see Briarcrest as a model for future Baptist school systems.

--A Southern Baptist Christian School Association was formed this year to give impetus to the parochial school movement among Southern Baptists and to provide training opportunities for school administrators. According to Charles Freeman, headmaster of Houston's Second Baptist Christian School and chairman of the association's planning committee, the idea originated at a Sunday School Board seminar. "There was a growing feeling at that meeting," he explained, "that it was time for Southern Baptists to unite their efforts in the vital ministry of day schools."

Some kind of united effort among Christian school administrators may be possible, but unity of support for parochial education among Southern Baptists as a whole may be another matter. Although the issue has received little public debate, Southern Baptist opinions about the merits of Christian schools differ widely.

One of the most outspoken proponents of Christian schools is W. A. Criswell, the fiery, conservative pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, which owns and operates First Baptist Academy with 630 students in kindergarten through grade 12. Criswell told the Houston parochial school rally that the Christian school holds the key to survival for Americans and for Southern Baptists.

"I'd like for the Sunday School Board, I'd like for the (SBC) Executive Committee...to tell me where the great leaders are coming from except from the boys and girls we're training in our Christian schools," he proclaimed. "If we don't train them and guide them in the Christian way, then we have no future as Baptists."

Criswell and other Christian school advocates believe that the parochial school can, and should, be an integral part of the church's overall ministry.

"Church members interested in propagation of the gospel should not object to an arm of the church offering academic education," comments Tommie Hamilton, principal of Houston's Long Point Baptist School. "The aim of Christian schools is education of the student for the glory of God. This should be the ultimate aim of every activity of the church."

In addition, many see the church-owned, church-operated school as a viable alternative to public schools which they believe have gone morally and academically sour. When done properly, says the Sunday School Board's Couch, an academically sound parochial school offers the advantage of "total education, education that emphasizes development of the whole person, including moral and spiritual growth, which the public school cannot do."

Larry Lewis, pastor of Tower Grove Baptist Church, St. Louis, had "some hesitation" about his church starting a parochial school. But "the thing that changed my mind was a constant flood of people moving to the suburbs because of their extreme dissatisfaction with public schools," he says. "Most of what we are trying to achieve in the Christian home was being discounted in the public schools. There was a time when the public school was an extension of values taught in the home," Lewis continues. "But in most places that is no longer true."

Success of the racially-integrated Tower Grove Elementary School, he says, has converted him from a "reluctant" to an "enthusiastic" support of parochial education. Criswell is even more emphatic. The parochial school, he stresses, represents "the greatest open door churches have today."

Other Southern Baptist leaders, however, aren't so sure. Some, in fact, insist that the Christian school compromises the integrity of the Southern Baptist corporate witness and hampers efforts in race relations.

John Havlik of the Home Mission Board's evangelism section believes the majority of Protestant parochial schools were established to circumvent public school desegregation. And he argues that even if the school did not begin for that reason, it usually is perceived that way, particularly by the black community, damaging the credibility and integrity of a denomination which, he says, has made more inroads into the ethnic population than any other evangelical body.

Havlik is also concerned that the parochial school, which he believes segregates on the basis of one's ability to pay, contributes to the denomination's increasing movement toward middle-class status, which isolates it from the poor. "If we protect a certain type of culture --in our case, white, middle-class culture-- then anytime we think we're reaching different

kinds of people, we're mistaken. As for the Christian school, I don't see how it can claim to reach out to poor people, because, simply, they cannot afford it."

Emmanuel McCall, director of the Home Mission Board's department of cooperative ministries with National (black) Baptists, believes a growth in Southern Baptist parochial schools "will have a negative impact on what we're trying to do to evangelize the nation."

McCall says blacks already "question, because of our separateness, whether our white churches are really Christian," and parochial schools contribute to this perception. "Blacks wonder whether we're really serious about the gospel message. They doubt our commitment to open fellowship, and the private school thing often becomes an illustration of our insincerity. 'If you're really serious,' they say, 'then what are you going to do about these so-called Christian schools?' They see our evangelism in programs like Bold Mission Thrust as a sham."

Regardless of churches' intentions, believes McCall, parochial schools "will be judged on the past, and the past does not speak too highly of Southern Baptists' commitment to open fellowship."

"Racism and classism" were the two principal factors which led Memphis Second Baptist Church to reject a proposal to sponsor an elementary school in the Briarcrest system, even though the church, according to pastor James Hatley, had given "serious consideration" earlier to starting a parochial school.

"Every parent has both a right and a responsibility for the education of his children," Hatley comments. "But the Christian parent has an additional responsibility--to want the same for all parents' children."

Other Southern Baptist churches which have decided to forego any involvement in parochial education have done so on more pragmatic grounds, based on factors such as cost requirements for renovation and new construction, difficulties with accreditation procedures, dual use of the church's facilities and priorities within the overarching objectives of the church.

Reggie McDonough, secretary of the Sunday School Board department which prepares the Bible curriculum for Christian schools, agrees that a parochial school is not feasible for many Southern Baptist churches. But he believes a parochial school can be "a legitimate method for a church to meet its mission." And the Southern Baptist Christian school movement, he predicts, will "mushroom" in the next few years.

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Baptist Leaders Endorse  
Usage of Videotapes

Baptist Press  
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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Videotapes will become a major factor in Southern Baptist Convention work in the next decade, participants at a video exploration conference at the SBC Sunday School Board concluded.

About 60 state executive secretaries and workers from state Baptist conventions and Southern Baptist agencies and boards discussed how Southern Baptists can utilize videotapes for teaching, training and communicating.

"It is clear from listening to this group that we no longer have a choice about moving in the direction of using videotapes," said Cecil Ray, general secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Convention. "The question is how do we best get on with it."

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Ray, who coordinated the two-day conference held in conjunction with the meeting of the SBC Executive Committee, said he had found the level of interest and enthusiasm high among state and agency personnel.

William R. O'Brien of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board said it's reasonable to assume that 10,000 Southern Baptist churches will have the equipment to utilize videotapes by 1984.

Bobbie Sorrill of the Woman's Missionary Union said a method should be found to financially help the convention's smaller churches and associations to become involved in the usage of videotapes.

Kenneth Day of the Home Mission Board said his agency sees videotape usage as a strong means of supporting Bold Mission Thrust, the Southern Baptist plan of sharing the gospel with the world by the year 2000. "This is one way that we can give Southern Baptists a face in many parts of the country where we are not known," he said.

Sunday School Board President Grady Cothen said, "The world of video can do many things for all of us, but it is imperative that we all remember that videotapes can never replace the need for warm bodies."

Ray said he would contact agency leaders "in the very near future" to discuss establishing an ongoing work group to map the convention's strategy to utilize videotapes.

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Indonesia Visa Situation  
Appears To Be Improving

Baptist Press  
9/25/79

JAKARTA, Indonesia (BP)--After nearly three months of restricted visa renewals, Southern Baptist missionaries in Indonesia report the situation appears to be improving.

Three mission families have received visa extensions without the notation "not to be extended again," a phrase which had been appearing on renewed visas. Edward O. Sanders, mission chairman, said reliable sources have told him these three non-restrictive visas mark the beginning of a new trend. Two of the extensions were for six months; the third for the normal extension time of a year.

Concern over Indonesian visas developed in July when the first of several Southern Baptist missionary families received a visa extension of only six months, rather than the usual 12 months, with the notation that it could not be renewed. Government letters were sent to missionaries of various organizations who had been in Indonesia at least five years, informing them of the policy. Under these restrictions nearly 90 percent of the Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to Indonesia would have been forced to leave the country within the next two years.

William R. Wakefield, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board secretary for South and Southeast Asia, called the visa situation "the gravest crisis we have faced in our Southeast Asia ministry since Vietnam and Laos fell." He called on Southern Baptists to pray that "an effective door for ministry and witness (would) remain open in Indonesia." Many factors have brought about this apparent change, Sanders said. Religious groups, foreign governments, influential individuals and high government officials have all brought pressure on the Indonesian government to change the policy. Although the situation looks better than it did in July, Sanders said the government is holding to its policy of limiting foreign influence and pushing foreigners to develop plans to train Indonesians to replace them.

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