

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee  
400 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37218  
(615) 244-2355W. C. Fields, Director  
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor  
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor**BUREAUS****ATLANTA** Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041**DALLAS** Richard T. McCartney, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996**MEMPHIS** Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2481**NASHVILLE** (Baptist Sunday School Board) \_\_\_\_\_, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2798**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3906 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151**WASHINGTON** Stan L. Haste, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

January 3, 1980

80-02

Seminary Enrollment  
Begins New Increases

By Norman Jameson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--After a year of virtual zero growth in 1978, fall enrollment in 1979 in all degree and non-degree programs at the six Southern Baptist theological seminaries rose 308 students, to 9,252, a growth rate of 3.8 percent.

The growth in degree-granting programs, figuring only full-time equivalents, rose 3.4 percent, to 8,706, according to statistics of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS).

The educational outreach of Southern Baptist seminaries is more than doubled through their cooperative Seminary Extension Department in Nashville. In the 1978-79 school year, it coordinated diploma course work for 10,505 students in home study and in 363 centers in the U.S., West Germany and England. Seminary Extension enrollment is compiled separately from the enrollments in the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., showed the largest percentage increase in a comparison of enrollment figures produced by the seminaries. Enrollment at the westernmost seminary increased by 93 students to 556. That total, a 16.7 percent increase, includes 96 in a diploma program.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary showed the largest numerical increase with 97. That increase pushed the school's enrollment to 1,242 including 62 in a diploma program, up 7.8 percent.

Marvin Taylor, statistician for ATS, said 193 reporting seminaries in the United States and Canada showed a growth rate of 4.2 percent. Enrollment at Southern Baptist seminaries accounted for 18 percent of the 48,433 students counted by ATS.

Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., with increased emphasis on extension centers, became the second largest seminary in the United States with 2,394 students, taking over the spot long held by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Southern's enrollment decreased for the second year in a row, dropping 2.6 percent to 2,170 in all programs, including 162 in Boyce Bible School, 30 in diploma courses and 156 non-credit students.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, continues to be the largest seminary in the United States, and likely the world, with enrollment of 3,564, including 151 diploma students, an increase of 3.2 percent over 1978.

Although Taylor wasn't positive because ATS doesn't gather statistics worldwide, he believes the largest five seminaries in the United States--four of which are Southern Baptist--are also the largest in the world.

-more-

New Orleans Seminary is the fourth largest, after Southern, and is followed by Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., with enrollment of 1,215. That number, which includes 110 in diploma courses and 50 in non-credit work, is an increase of 7.8 percent over the 1978 enrollment.

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., increased 2.4 percent to 505 students, including 46 students enrolled in the School of Christian Training, a non-degree program.

Females accounted for 1,660 or 18 percent of the total enrollment in the Southern Baptist seminaries. Women account for 21.1 percent of the seminary enrollment overall, according to ATS figures. That compares to just 10.2 percent in 1972.

-30-

Missionaries Hold Impromptu  
Commissioning for Parks

Baptist Press  
1/3/80

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Missionaries staged an impromptu "commissioning" ceremony for their incoming executive director, R. Keith Parks, during a symposium at the Student Conference on World Missions in Nashville.

Parks, who was to be officially installed as chief executive of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board Jan. 7, knelt at center stage of the Grand Ole Opry House as more than 40 foreign missionaries circled him and led in a prayer for his administration.

The ceremony was sprung on Parks by Dean Dickens, a missionary to the Philippines, who said the furloughing missionaries participating in the conference represented "our colleagues around the world."

"We want to take part in a commissioning service for you as you will lead us in the coming years," Dickens said. "It is appropriate that we are doing this at a student meeting, because you will mean a lot in the lives of students in the coming decade."

Around Parks stood missionaries representing every sector of the globe in front of a huge backdrop showing the faces of people from all parts of the world. The flags of all 50 states and 77 foreign nations flanked them as Bill O'Brien, the board's director of denominational coordination, prayed for "leadership" for Parks and "followership" for the mission personnel around the world.

Parks, a veteran of 25 years as a missionary and board administrator, officially succeeded Baker James Cauthen as head of the agency at 12:01 a.m. Jan. 1, 1980. Cauthen, who also took part in the conference, retires after 26 years as executive director and 40 years of mission service.

In his introductory remarks to the students participating in the conference, sponsored by the National Student Ministries of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Parks had two predictions about the coming decade:

"We're facing dangerous times in world missions," he predicted. "It will be more volatile, more violent, with more persecution than we have seen. Second, I predict it will be more exciting, more challenging and more productive than any decade in a long time."

-30-

### Cannata Urges Students To Disciplined Lifestyle

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--There's no such thing as "comfortable Christianity," medical missionary Sam Cannata warned participants in the Southern Baptist Student Conference on World Missions, which closed out the decade of the 1970s.

"If we're going to defeat Satan, we're going to have to do it just like Jesus Christ did--through obedience, discipline and sacrifice," said the missionary who was held in an Ethiopian prison for 16 days in 1977.

Cannata, now a missionary in Kenya, told more than 3,300 students at the Grand Ole Opry House that the outcome of the "war" between God and Satan has been determined, with God the winner.

"The question is, are we going to win with God or not?" he asked, indicating Christians won't win if they continue the pursuit of more comfortable lifestyles.

Cannata, who lost one eye to disease on the field, admonished the students to break away from the life pattern currently dominating the United States which he characterized by "selfishness and greed."

"Can we strike for higher wages when we know there are people who do not have enough to eat?" he asked. "Can Americans--six percent of the world's population--continue to consume 70 percent of the world's resources?"

Cannata said Christians must become true disciples of Christ, which means they are owned by God.

To aid them in their struggles for discipleship, Cannata advised the students to remember "that Jesus is Lord of all the circumstances of our lives, . . . that he is Lord of the universe and that discipleship is his plan for mankind."

Even with these facts in mind, he acknowledged that the struggle for true discipleship is not easy.

"The lifestyle of Jesus is tough, but abundant life accompanies it," he said. "That makes it all worth it."



January 3, 1980

80-02

Washington Deacon Sees  
Religion Decay in China

By Donald Sorensen

PEKING (BP)--"Have you ever heard of Jesus Christ?"

"Pardon?" the young Chinese woman replied as a puzzled frown decorated her face. "What do you mean?"

"Do you go to church?" I pursued my questioning. She shook her head.

After I explained that many people in the United States go to church to worship Jesus Christ, she began to get the connection.

This young woman was 24 years old and a university graduate, yet she had never heard of Jesus Christ. But her case was not unusual.

Another 24-year-old woman said she never goes to church and that she had never heard of Jesus.

"Young people don't go to church here," a young man said in Peking. "I don't believe in it."

"It doesn't make sense," another young man replied. "Young people don't go in for religion."

"Going to church makes sense to me and I do it," I told him. "It's OK for you," he came back. "But young people don't need it."

A religious vacuum exists in China, especially among young people. This was obvious from talking with the people and other signs during our 10-day stay when we visited Peking, Shanghai and Canton.

A Russian Orthodox church in Shanghai is being used as an electrical products factory. Chinese labor under religious inscriptions still intact on the interior of the dome. A Catholic church building in Peking is a school.

There are very few signs of a spiritual nature in China. An entire generation has grown up without religious education. Churches were closed and taken over by the government for use as schools, factories, even warehouses.

As in most periods of persecution, a remnant remains faithful and is around to revive the gospel when the opportunity arises.

Three pastors in Peking are again preaching the gospel. They are the Rev. Yin Chieh Cheng, 69; the Rev. Kan Shueh Ching, 54; and the Rev. Liu Chung Ho, 71.

Kan said the only Protestant church in Peking was allowed to reopen in 1971 and the first service was on Christmas Day. It attracted one person, an employee of the Pakistan Embassy.

The following Easter, 20 came to the service. Regular services have been held since 1972, but attendance has been low, they said. Only three, four or five worshiped most of the time, and they were mostly foreigners. But the pastors never gave up.

The turning point came last March, when the new government announced that religious freedom would be guaranteed.

"Since April, our attendance has steadily increased," Yin said. "We had about 11 in March, but last Sunday (Oct. 28) we had about 120.

"More and more Christians are coming back to church. Most of them are older people, but they are beginning to come back."

"There is a comparatively small number of conversions," Kan added, "but more interest is being shown. The number is getting larger and we hope to open a bigger church soon."

At no time did the pastors lose faith, they said. "We have believed in God," said Yin. "We could only say prayers. We believed God was taking care of us and would be responsible for us."

In the mid-1960s, when the Red Guard closed the churches, some pastors were sent to the country to work on farms. Others like Yin and Kan were locked up in their churches doing work for the government during the day. They were allowed to go home at night.

"We have no government interference now," said Kan. "We still have some buildings that belong to the church and we hope to be able to use them in the future."

-30-

Sorensen is a business writer for The Oregonian in Portland, Ore., and a deacon at Metropolitan Baptist Church there.

---