



-- FEATURES
produced by Baptist Press

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April 29, 1981

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**Bold Mission More Significant
Than Inerrancy Debate: May**

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—When the Southern Baptist history of the late 1970s and early 1980s is written, Bold Mission Thrust efforts to share the gospel will be viewed as more significant than current debates over biblical inerrancy.

Lynn E. May Jr., a 25-year employee of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission and executive director the last 10 years, bases that conviction on his knowledge of the past and his views of current events in his denomination.

"It is obvious there are many directions these issues—inerrancy and who will control the denomination—could take us," said May, a lean, quiet-spoken man. "But I think we'll look back on this period as a time when Southern Baptists began to realize anew their purpose for being."

May hopes the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in June will be an affirming experience. "I hope we'll find more effective ways of involving people in the denominational process and learn to love one another even though we disagree," he said in an interview during the annual joint meeting of the commission and Southern Baptist Historical Society.

May is quick to emphasize that diversity, including disagreement, is an important part of Baptist history.

"There has always been diversity among Baptists in general and Southern Baptists in particular," said May, who became the second professional employee of the commission only five years after its founding in 1951.

"The very emergence of Southern Baptists is a result of many streams flowing into what we have today. If people could grasp the strength of our diversity they wouldn't be so interested in trying to pour us into one mold," he emphasized.

May believes an inadequate understanding of Baptist traditions and polity is at the heart of some of the problems facing the denomination today.

"We don't like to talk about it, but we're losing members to other faiths and to inactivity," May noted. "Many of these have never been equipped to understand who they are as Baptists. They aren't closely tied to their church and denomination and are vulnerable to para-church groups and even cults."

On the other hand, May believes that a solid grounding in Baptist history will cause persons to commit themselves to missions, reaching people and starting new churches.

Reflecting on current SBC conflicts, May said, "Some seem to feel we're at a turning point in the life of our convention. Inerrancy and movements to gain control of convention apparatus have caused a lot of Southern Baptists to take a new look at where we came from and where we're going."

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Referring to a paper, "Baptist Theological Battles Are Not New," which he wrote in the 1960s "during another controversy," May said Baptists have traditionally come through difficulties "more committed to their purposes of missions and ministry."

"I am confident that Southern Baptists are united in their commitment to Christ and to resolving differences," he said.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

TV Moral
Time Bomb

By Greg Warner

Baptist Press
April 29, 1981

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--"TV is a moral time bomb, ticking away in our homes, and little is being done to disarm it."

Harry Hollis, director of family and special moral concerns for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, offered that description of morality in the media at the National Conference on Broadcast Ministries. The conference is jointly sponsored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Hollis stressed the need to capitalize on the medium's potential for good and said the Bible should be the "Christian's moral 'TV Guide.'"

But Hollis also emphasized the complexity of the issue of media morality. Often it is a case of good people "caught up in systems that are sometimes good and sometimes evil."

Television has a negative impact, Hollis said, when it presents "morally-warped family models," stereotyped and dehumanizing characters, a "greedy consumerism," and "the use of violence as a formula for entertainment" and for problem solving. Television also offers "sex miseducation" and discourages social involvement by making viewers passive observers of a narrow slice of life.

While television's influence for good has been less obvious, great potential is there, Hollis said. Television has sometimes uncovered the evils of racism, violence and war. It encourages some family and social interaction on issues and some moral decision making.

But the real potential for good, Hollis pointed out, is when television is used to change the people who watch it.

"The best way to overcome the negative impact of the media is to share the Good News with people, it is the gospel of Jesus Christ that changes us."

Hollis called on Christians to present the gospel's alternatives to television's materialism, sex exploitation and violence.

However, Hollis implied censorship is not the way to bring about a change in television programming. Instead, Christians need to "sensitize" television programmers to the serious individual and social consequences of programming that is morally irresponsible.

"The most certain way to censorship is the refusal of the programmers to tune into the American people to whom the airways belong," he said.

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Hollis added Christians have a right and a duty to communicate their programming preferences to sponsors and stations.

"All television is pay television," he said, since viewers pay for advertised products. "Don't try to make us feel guilty for exercising our free enterprise rights to tell the people we help pay what we like and dislike."

Hollis cited the programming of the Radio and Television Commission as an example of the positive moral impact of television. It avoids financial and political exploitation and "celebrity religion" and encourages social and local church involvement, he said.

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Fulbright Resigns
Sunday School Board

Baptist Press
4/29/81

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Robert G. Fulbright, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching division since 1977, has resigned effective May 15 to enter private business.

A 16-year veteran of the board, Fulbright, 46, was supervisor of the preschool-children's section in the Sunday School department and manager of the Broadman products department before assuming his present position four years ago.

Fulbright plans to open a travel agency in Nashville in partnership with Glenn Wilcox of Asheville, N.C.

James W. Clark, executive vice president of the board, said, "Bob Fulbright is a fine manager and a very creative individual. His skills and insights will be missed immediately and his past contributions to the board will continue to be a positive influence."

Fulbright said his work at the board "has been rewarding and fulfilling. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities that service to this institution has afforded me and for the host of friends I have made at the Sunday School Board and throughout the Southern Baptist Convention."

A North Carolina native, Fulbright is a graduate of Furman University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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Abner McCall To Oppose
Smith for SBC President

By Dan Martin

Baptist Press
4/29/81

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (BP)--Abner V. McCall, president of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, will be nominated to oppose Bailey Smith for the presidency of the 13.6 million-member Southern Baptist Convention.

"I have asked for and received his permission to put his name into nomination," said Ralph Langley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Huntsville, and a long-time supporter of the Texas Baptist school.

Smith, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla., was elected at the 1980 annual meeting in St. Louis and has announced his intention to seek the traditional second term.

McCall, Langley said, will give Southern Baptists a clear choice "against the anti-education, anti-institution, anti-board, anti-literature mentality current in the convention."

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"Dr. McCall waged a fight for Christian higher education under the Baptist banner in Texas. The (Paul) Pressler-(Paige) Patterson coalition staged a significant struggle against Baylor. Dr. McCall was in the middle of the battle and he stood tall. He won it," Langley said.

He referred to the effort, said directed by Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge, and Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, against Baylor and the chairman of its religion department, Jack Flanders, over a book Flanders wrote and which was used as a text in religion classes.

McCall told Baptist Press he realizes the "odds are against" his winning the presidency, but said he thinks the "group primarily backing Smith have given support to an attitude of exclusion of a substantial segment of Southern Baptist people. They say 'If you don't agree with me you ought to be removed from all boards and committees, in fact excluded from participation in Southern Baptist affairs.'"

"Such a spirit threatens not only the Cooperative Program but also the whole program of the Southern Baptist Convention," and is "the spirit of the spoils system," he said.

McCall added he believes the inerrancy issue "is largely a stalking horse. All of our people are conservative, Bible-believing Baptists. The people who say they are the only ones who are looking at the Bible in just the right way are the ones who are divisive."

He also added that if "reading the Bible doesn't make you love your brethren, then something must be wrong with you."

He declined to comment directly on Smith's leadership, but said: "I agree with those who are not satisfied with his leadership."

McCall reiterated he did not seek the nomination, and in fact had hoped to have a lessening of responsibilities when he leaves the presidency of Baylor in June to become chancellor.

McCall, 65, was nominated for the presidency of the convention in the 1979 Houston convention, but was defeated by Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis. McCall subsequently was nominated as first vice president and won in a runoff election.

McCall was reared in the Fort Worth Masonic Home and Orphanage, where he, his brothers and sister were placed after the death of their father in 1918. He graduated from Masonic High School and received a small scholarship to Baylor, where he earned a law degree in 1938 and a bachelor of arts degree in 1942.

He taught at Baylor from 1938 to 1942, when he joined the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He returned in 1946 and remained until 1956, when he became an associate justice of the Supreme Court of Texas. He returned in 1959 as executive vice president and was elected president in 1961.

In reaction to the announcement, Smith said: "I do not know Dr. McCall very well personally, but I know he is a fine person. He certainly has every right to have his name put in nomination. My prayer is that God's will shall be done in every aspect of our convention."

Pressler said: "I had hoped the convention in Los Angeles would be a healing and harmonious one. I deeply regret any action that will spoil this spirit (of harmony)."

Jimmy Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, and former president of the SBC Pastors' Conference, said: "I have the highest respect for Dr. McCall. I have worked with him for the past seven years as a member of the Baylor trustees. I love him, but I am really disappointed he would allow his name to be presented against Bailey Smith. Bailey has done a very good job in a very difficult situation. He has done an admirable job and I think he ought to be reelected."

Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Asheville, N.C., and a leader of a moderate wing of the convention, said he is "very pleased Dr. McCall is offering the convention an option." He emphasized the group of which he is a leader "does not have a candidate," and said he plans to support anyone who runs against Bailey Smith.

Kenneth Chafin, pastor of South Main Baptist Church of Houston and another moderate leader, welcomes McCall's candidacy, and said he intends to vote for him.

"This election is not a personality contest. For the past few years we have elected glamour boys from the evangelism circuit and have discovered they don't know much about denomination and don't care very much," Chafin said.

"We are not voting on smiles, platform antics or even activity in the baptistry. We are voting on what kind of Baptists we want to be. The choice is whether we intend to be Southern Baptists carrying out a program of world missions through the institutions we have set up, or whether we are going to be Frank Norris fundamentalists with a narrow, angry creedal base.

"I believe we do not want to be a bunch of fundamentalists who turn aside from the world missions task to fight over a theory of inspiration," Chafin added.

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Israeli Village
Relief Considered

Baptist Press
4/29/81

KEFR YASIF, Israel (BP)--The Baptist Convention in Israel is conferring with church and community leaders in Kefr Yasif to determine possible disaster relief needs following an attack on the village which left two men dead and 91 homes damaged.

The northern Galilee Christian village was attacked by a large group of men from the neighboring Druze village of Julis following the stabbing death of a Druze man during a fight at a football game. The Druze are a religious sect whose creed is basically Muslim.

Homes of Kefr Yasif Local Church and Arab Episcopal Church members sustained heavy damage or were completely gutted by fire bombs. Businesses were pillaged and 23 automobiles were burned.

Yusif Audi, pastor of the Local church, reported that Christian homes were singled out in the attack although some Muslim and Druze residents tried to protect their Christian neighbors during the attack.

The Local church has been in close fellowship with Baptists in Nazareth since revival swept both congregations in 1973. Ray G. Register Jr., Southern Baptist representative stationed in Nazareth, has made monthly visits to the village to preach and show Christian films.

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