



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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81-93

CP Study Committee Establishes Purpose

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A special committee met recently in Nashville to begin the first exhaustive study of the Cooperative Program since it was born in 1925.

Executive Committee Executive Secretary Harold C. Bennett calls the 21-member SBC Cooperative Program Study Committee "one of the most important committees in Southern Baptist life if we are going to reach the world for Christ."

Executive Committee Chairman Howard Cobble named the committee members which include eight pastors, five SBC agency executives, three state executive secretaries, four laypersons and a state Baptist newspaper editor.

The Cooperative Program is the primary method of financing state Baptist conventions and agencies and institutions of the Southern Baptist Convention. Today, 35,500 SBC churches contribute voluntarily an amount that averages approximately 8.8 percent of their offering plate income.

The study committee's purpose is "to discover ways to strengthen financial support for the Cooperative Program and all Southern Baptist causes through stewardship education and involvement."

Among six objectives determined at the Nashville meeting is to determine and recommend any changes needed in the basic structure of the Cooperative Program.

"There will be no sacred cows in the pasture," said committee member R. Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board.

Other specific objectives are to determine the effect of special missions offerings and fund-raising campaigns on the Cooperative Program; to determine how decision makers perceive the relationship between special offerings and the Cooperative Program and how their perceptions affect giving; to identify a plan of action to strengthen understanding and support of the Cooperative Program; and to recommend a plan of action to increase giving to the local church and through the church to the Southern Baptist Convention cooperative ministries.

James Pleitz, committee chairman and pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, said the study will be wide open with "no holds barred."

He predicted it may be a year or longer before the committee report is ready. It next meets in September. Pleitz asks prayer for the committee and wants to receive suggestions for committee action. "We're anxious to hear from people in the churches," he said.

His address: Park Cities Baptist Church, 3933 Northwest Parkway, Dallas, Texas 75225.

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"This committee is extremely important," Parks emphasized. "It's a crucial item that we're dealing with. It appears to me we need to get a fresh appreciation and understanding of our cooperative effort."

"If we can get out of this committee a direction that will rally us around a common cause and renew the excitement of the total effort we're doing as Baptists, the committee is tremendously significant."

"The Cooperative Program is more than a financial plan," Parks said. "It is an attitude, a concept, a commitment to being part of the whole and getting excited about the total ministry of Southern Baptists."

Reginald McDonough, associate executive secretary of the Executive Committee and secretary for the study committee, said, "Business as usual is not going to get the job done in the future."

"Whether we call it Cooperative Program or something else," McDonough said, "we've got to have a way to support our cooperative work for the future that will do what the Cooperative Program has done in the past."

Bennett said: "The members of the committee are committed to Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust program. They are creative and are exploring new ways to undergird world missions through the Cooperative Program."

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House Panel Seeks To Cut Non-Profit Postal Hike

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WASHINGTON (BP)— The House Post Office and Civil Service Committee has voted to minimize a Reagan budget proposal to sharply increase postage costs this October for Baptist state papers and all other non-profit mailers.

Declining to follow the administration's recommendation to eliminate a postal subsidy which allows non-profit publications to move gradually toward paying full rates in annual steps, the committee instead voted to reduce the subsidy by only 10 percent.

That action kept alive the hopes of non-profit publications that the projected doubling of their postage costs this October can be avoided. But the issue is far from settled.

It is complicated by the fact that the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee already has recommended cuts that the Postal Service claims will require the elimination of the phasing subsidy, as well as by the possibility that a substitute budget will be presented in the House which is more similar to the Reagan and Senate proposals.

If the House committee's proposal, which will be presented on the floor by the House Budget Committee in a large omnibus reconciliation bill, were enacted, the phasing process would continue. But because the recommendation calls for 10 percent reductions in each of the next three fiscal years, the subsidy would be eliminated more quickly than Congress originally planned.

When it decided that non-profit mailers should pay their full costs, Congress set up a phasing period, extended through 1987, to ease the shock of increased costs.

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A spokesman for the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee declined to predict the recommendation's chances but said if an administration substitute budget is offered on the House floor, "It will be a tough fight."

Regardless of whether that fight occurs, if the restoration of most of the phasing subsidy survives in the House, it will still face another battle in a conference committee where differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget will be resolved.

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Missionary Doctor Makes
No Apology for Evangelism

By Irma Duke

Baptist Press
6/17/81

KEDIRI, Indonesia (BP)—Don Duvall was near exhaustion. He had performed three emergency operations before the burn patient was brought in that Sunday.

But the Lexington, Ky., native took the patient to the operating room at Kediri Baptist Hospital and cleaned him up.

On Monday, with almost no sleep the night before, Duvall made morning rounds and reported to the operating room once again for his surgery schedule that lasted until 3 p.m.

He drove home and went to bed but couldn't sleep. He started thinking about that burn patient who was lucid now but, like other severely burned patients, would soon be unconscious.

Something grabbed hold of him and said, "If you really want to talk to this guy, you had better go now."

So Duvall got up and went back to the hospital to tell the patient about Jesus Christ. In his last hours of consciousness, that patient made a profession of faith.

"Our main purpose is evangelism," Duvall says without apology. "In the states, we could set up a clinic in a poor area and it would be good, even if we were just doing a social ministry.

"But the end is not to practice the highest medicine available but to practice in such a way that the gospel is spread," he explains. "We're not the Mayo Clinic but we do what we can with what we've got and we actually do pretty well."

It's that heart for evangelism that keeps Duvall on the mission field making what all the other missionaries make instead of earning \$75,000—\$100,000 a year in the states. He and his physician wife, the former Sarah Eddleman, had to come to grips with that when they were appointed missionaries in 1972. He was offered a position in a private practice in Lexington with a starting salary of \$50,000.

"I'd always said the money didn't make any difference but I have to admit, I was tempted," he says. He had to look back at his initial commitment and ask himself, "as a junior kid in RAs, did I really know what I was doing?" (RAs, Royal Ambassadors, is a youth missions organization.) He came out of the experience with a stronger sense of God's call into missions.

Even though his days stretch beyond the hours demanded of a surgeon in the states, he performs surgery as if it were an art and painstakingly does the best job he can. He has a tremendous amount of pride in what he does, especially his cleft lip surgery. Most doctors in the area hesitate to put the children to sleep to do it. They don't want to take the risk of something happening to the children because children are their parents' old-age pension in Indonesian society.

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Duvall's care for his patients is much more than what he learned at Tulane University in New Orleans, La. He has worked hard at learning Javanese even though it is not the spoken language today because he wants to communicate with the older people and to show them he cares. He has a good sense of humor and has deliberately learned what is funny in Indonesian culture so that he can joke with patients and employees.

And even in tense situations, he keeps his cool. "I don't know of anyone I'd rather be in the operating room with in a tense situation," offers Ruth Vanderburg, a missionary nurse. "When he plays, he plays hard and when he works, he works hard," Vandy adds.

Another missionary, Ken Hinton, says Duvall "maintains a diplomacy that is rarely seen." As hospital administrator he doesn't threaten employees. He doesn't barge in and try to change things: he brings about change gradually and diplomatically.

There aren't many surgeons in the world that carry the loads of both surgeon and hospital administrator but he took on these roles before he was 40. "Many others would have folded under it but he has done a good job," Vandy adds.

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

Prayer Room Vital
To SBC, Workers Say

By Orville Scott

Baptist Press
6/17/81

LOS ANGELES (BP) — Coordinators of the first special prayer rooms to be set up at the Southern Baptist Convention say they were a vital tool in nurturing greater Christian harmony and unity at a crucial time in the denomination's history.

Hundreds of people used the prayer rooms at the Convention Center and the headquarters hotel, the Los Angeles Hilton, the workers say, and the rooms were a vital link in the motivating and inspiring messengers to share the Christian message daily and in the "Happy Birthday Los Angeles" personal evangelism effort.

Jack Taylor of Fort Worth, Texas, who was first vice president of the SBC, implemented the prayer program, and believes it will become an integral part of future conventions.

"This will come nearer than anything I know to instilling the kind of Christian spirit we should have at the Southern Baptist Convention. When men work, then men work, but when men pray, God works," said Taylor, who heads a discipleship ministry called "Dimensions of Christian Living." Before that, Taylor was pastor of Castle Hills Baptist Church, San Antonio, for 17 years.

Taylor said he hopes to see "less political maneuvering and more powerful praying at the SBC."

The prayer effort began months ago with the selection of prayer coordinators for each of the 34 state conventions and three Baptist fellowships. A prayer chain has been underway for several months, and May 24 was prayer Sunday throughout the SBC.

Beginning the night before the Convention at the headquarters hotel, the prayer coordinators were on hand around the clock to welcome people who came to pray.

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Baskets were provided in each room for people to leave names and requests for which they wished other messengers to join them in praying.

One coordinator said that just before the presidential election on Tuesday there was a group in the special room at the Convention Center, "praying that God's choice for president would be the messengers' choice."

Among the prayer requests left in the rooms were:

--"A waitress named Linda in the _____ restaurant needs Jesus."

-- "Willie and I shared Christ with this young man last night in front of our hotel, and he prayed and received Christ as Savior and Lord. Please pray that he will find a good Bible teaching church and become all God wants him to be," another request said.

--"God has been working in my heart and of these in Kodiak. . . revival and a spiritual awakening through the land," a third request reported.