



-- **FEATURES**  
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Seminary Student Turns  
Hostility Into Ministry

By Stephen Long

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Carl Nelson hated white people and God when he was five.

The trigger for that hatred was an incident 22 years ago in Mississippi, when Nelson, a black, innocently stepped into a public wading pool occupied by a white child.

"Her mother sent a bigger, older brother to beat me up," Nelson recalls. "And that's when I started hating both white people and God. How could God allow that boy to beat me up?"

Now 27, Nelson is a third-year theology student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Every weekend he drives 300 miles, alternating as pastor of two rural black congregations with a combined average attendance of 225.

Nelson is preparing for a ministry that includes all people, regardless of color. But the path to that commitment has been strewn with obstacles.

When he was seven, Nelson's family moved to Memphis, Tenn., where "a gang jumped me the first day."

"I decided then that I would fight back," he relates. The next day he bought a knife, and the gang left him alone. But the incident caused him to "wonder where this God was my grandmother told me about."

Nelson's grandmother helped raise him and three other children after his father abandoned the family when the oldest of four children was five. But even a caring mother and grandmother could not sway Nelson from his early-rooted hatred.

While still in high school, he became a pimp. Controlling his prostitutes meant carrying weapons, and violent confrontations were inevitable. On separate occasions he was stabbed in the chest and shot.

Nelson's concern for fellow blacks eventually led him to the Black Panthers. Martin Luther King's assassination in 1968 intensified Nelson's hostility despite the recurring prayer and conviction of his grandmother that "one day the Lord is going to open your eyes."

That day came at age 17 when Nelson heard a sermon he still remembers. "The preacher said that even after Jesus had been beaten and persecuted, he prayed, 'Father, forgive them,'" Nelson recalls. "I wanted to read more about what the preacher had said. I lied about the reasons, but I got a Bible and began to read."

At that point, Nelson began "not to trust whites, but to at least give them a chance."

After becoming a Christian, Nelson's life got no easier. In Army intelligence in Vietnam, he was wounded by a land mine explosion which killed two men next to him.

Nelson's turbulent past has had an impact on his commitment to ministry. When he came to Southern Seminary, residue of his hostility toward white persons remained. "For a while I felt there was a separate gospel for blacks and whites," he admits. But he credits professors

such as Clyde Francisco, Dale Moody and Frank Stagg with helping him understand that "the same gospel applies to all races."

Now he believes "the Lord is leading me to preach the gospel to the poor and the 'put down, in ghettos--both black and white--and a lot of other places most people don't want to go."

"If you haven't been there, felt the pain, seen the hurt, and experienced living in poverty and hate," he explains, "it may be hard to understand why I want to minister in those places."

But for a young man who found healing for his hatred in the gospel, such a conviction is easily understood.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southern Seminary.

Southeastern Trustees  
Proceed With Projects

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WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary elected officers and voted to proceed with two classroom projects in their semi-annual meeting.

Re-elected to a second term as chairman was Sam D. Allen of Savannah, Ga., president of S. A. Allen, Inc. of Savannah and a member of Bull Street Baptist Church.

Bill G. Bruster, pastor of Central Baptist Church of Bearden in Knoxville, Tenn., was elected vice-chairman. Re-elected to second terms were Henry T. Finch Jr., pastor of Oakland Baptist Church in Rock Hill, S.C., as secretary, and Edgar Wyatt, president, Wyatt-Quarles Seed Co., Raleigh, N.C., as treasurer.

A \$400,000 development of the ground floor of Binkley Chapel into classrooms was approved. The project will transform 11,000 square feet of unused space into two large and four small classrooms equipped for a variety of teaching methods. Funds for the project will be provided by Southern Baptist Convention's capital funds.

In addition, the trustees approved a plan to refurbish Appleby Hall, a classroom facility. The \$55,000 project will be funded by grants from the Cannon Trust and the Appleby Trust Fund.

In his report to trustees, Southeastern President W. Randall Lolley said the school's \$3.5 million "Equipping for Bold Mission" campaign is nearing its goal. The campaign ends Dec. 31. He also said the seminary has completed an extensive self-study required by accrediting agencies every ten years.

In other action, the trustees:

--Adopted a plan for long-range planning to set objectives for the period 1984-2000;

--Approved sabbatical leave for Professor Richard Hester;

--Adopted a resolution of appreciation for retiring Assistant Business Manager Willie Edwin Bobo;

--Established the Missions Action Endowment Fund with a gift of \$46,453 from an anonymous donor; and

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--Approved the charter and bylaws of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Foundation, Inc., which will receive and manage gifts to the seminary.

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Baptist Video Tape  
Productions Distributed

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11/11/81

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The first 13 productions for the Southern Baptist Video Tape Service (VTS) have been distributed to participating state agencies for use in churches and associations.

The Video Tape Service (formerly the Baptist Video Network) is a cooperative effort by Southern Baptist Convention agencies and state conventions to provide teaching and training materials to local Baptist groups.

Eight VTS tapes were produced by the Radio and Television Commission during July and August. These join five already produced by the Christian Life Commission on marriage and the family. After duplication in Nashville, the programs, of varying lengths, were distributed to 20 state conventions participating in VTS.

Three programs have been taped for the Home Mission Board. They are "Revival Preparation for the Local Church," "Cooperative Ministries with Black Americans" and "The Association: A Base for Mission Strategy."

The Stewardship Commission has initiated four tapes. They are "The Cooperative Program," "Ministry Action Budgeting," "Money Management" and "Living the Responsible Life."

"The Gift of Life," a film on the Mission Service Corps, produced jointly by the Home and Foreign Mission Boards, has been transferred to tape for VTS use.

The Christian Life Commission's five programs feature marriage and family counselor David Mace. They are "Clergy Marriages in Crisis," "Dealing with Marital Conflicts," "Marriage from the Critical First Year," "Three Essentials for Marriage" and "Love, Anger and Intimacy."

Long-range goals for VTS are to produce 60 programs each year and to have 1,000 associations and 10,000 churches using the service.

The tapes are designed primarily for use on one-half inch VHS video players, but also are available in three-quarter inch format. The Sunday School Board has arranged to sell the needed video players to churches and associations at a reduced cost.

Each participating convention will receive one copy of each tape produced. It then may duplicate and distribute the programs as it wishes. Some of the tapes will be available free to churches and associations, others for a service fee.

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Illinois Baptists Accept  
Report To Decline College

URBANA, Ill. (BP)-- Illinois Baptists, meeting in their 74th annual convention, voted to expand and strengthen education and training opportunities already present, rather than to attempt to start a four-year college in the state.

Messengers heard a recommendation from an ad hoc committee on higher education, which suggested current programs be revised, broadened and strengthened.

The action takes a \$10,400 contribution to Judson and Southwest Baptist Colleges, and sets it aside for scholarship aid for ministerial and lay leadership training.

In taking the action, messengers said the reassignment of funds earmarked for the colleges does not, in any sense, detract from the "esteem" the Illinois Baptist State Association has for the two institutions.

Messengers re-elected Craig A. Ridings, a Rockford attorney, as president and Donald Sharp, pastor of Faith Tabernacle Baptist Church in Chicago, as vice president.

They also honored Harold Cameron, state missions director for 29 years, who will retire this year.

Messengers also voted to ask Ridings to appoint a committee to study the related problems of pastoral turnover and job insecurity and to make suggestions as to what can be done to help ministers.

A 1982 budget of \$6,621,045 was adopted, of which \$3,849,968 will come from the churches of the state. Following through with a plan voted in 1980, the Illinois Baptist State Association will contribute 41.5 percent of its receipts to world-wide missions causes through the Southern Baptist Convention unified budget, up a half percent from 1980. The plan calls for increasing contributions to world-wide causes by a half percent a year for the next five years.

The 1982 annual meeting will be Oct. 26-28 in the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield. The meeting will be the 75th annual session of the IBSA.

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Wester Declines Second Term  
As Mississippi President

Baptist Press  
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JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--Mississippi Baptists elected James Yates, pastor of First Baptist Church, Yazoo City, as president, adopted a 1982 budget of \$13.9 million, and passed resolutions concerning peace, pornography, television and morality and prison ministry.

Yates succeeds Brooks Wester, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, who became the first Mississippi Convention president since 1907 to decline a traditional second one-year term.

Wester explained to the record 1,484 messengers that a \$1.2 million expansion project at his church prevents him from giving the office the time it needs. He also informally suggested that the convention consider allowing one year only for presidents.

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Other convention officers elected were Ed McDaniel, pastor of First Baptist Church, Greenwood, first vice-president; and Bill Hardy, minister of education at First Baptist Church, Columbus, second vice-president. Hardy is a former chairman of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

The budget sets aside 34 percent to Southern Baptist Convention causes outside the state. This is a half percent rise from 1981.

Lewis Nobles, president of Mississippi College, reported that the final documents have not been signed to attach Clarke College (the Mississippi Baptist junior college in Newton) to Mississippi College. But in August, the Clinton school's trustees began administration of the junior college with permission of the Clarke trustees.

The 1980 Mississippi Baptist Convention authorized Mississippi College to take over the financially ailing Clarke College. That process continues as third-year programs were added this fall.

Messengers adopted resolutions calling for arms control while maintaining defense preparedness as a deterrent to war, condemning pornography, and condemning the "unacceptable lifestyle" portrayed in television programs.

The television resolution vigorously opposed any attempt to remove public interest as a basis for regulation and called on church members to share their programming concerns with networks, local stations and sponsors.

A resolution on prison ministry said that since the majority of prisoners at Parchman State Prison are Baptists, the state board of corrections should employ an appropriate number of Baptist chaplains. Currently no Baptist chaplains serve the prison.

The 1982 meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention will be Nov. 8-10 at First Baptist Church, Jackson.

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No Dry Eyes  
For New Baby

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URBANA, Ill. (BP)--There was hardly a dry eye in the Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church when David and Norma Moreland brought their 10-month-old baby to the platform.

"We waited 18 years for a baby," Norma said, "and every day I look at Mary Elizabeth and tell her she's very special, that Jesus gave her to us."

"On Wednesday, July 1, I had just opened the Illinois Baptist and was reading an article about a baby needing a home, when I turned to Norma and said, 'Norma, here's our baby,'" Moreland explained.

Moreland, pastor of the Oak Street Baptist Church in Flora, said it was thought the baby might be totally blind, and had been tentatively diagnosed as having brain damage.

"Within 10 minutes, I had picked up the phone and called the home in Carmi," he said. "We made application to adopt the baby, which had been given up by its natural mother. We're so glad she didn't get an abortion."

The Morelands explained that Mary Elizabeth is now walking and is in good health. "She had brain wave tests and appears to be normal," they said. "She sees clearly out of one eye, and can distinguish light and darkness in the other."

The Morelands credit God for answering their prayers for a baby, and for the Baptists of Illinois for providing maternity care for the mother and baby.

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