



**--FEATURES**  
produced by Baptist Press

SBC Executive Committee  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355  
Wilmer C. Fields, Director  
Dan Martin, News Editor  
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

March 8, 1982

82-36

Shroud No Product  
Of Human Handiwork

By Norman Jameson

WILTON, Conn. (BP)--The haunting three-dimensional image of a crucified man on the Shroud of Turin is definitely not the work of human hands, says Southern Baptist scientist John Heller.

But Heller, founder and executive director of the New England Institute, center for interdisciplinary research, says no one will ever know if the 14-by-4 foot linen was the burial cloth of Jesus because there are no tests to prove Jesus' presence.

And it really makes no difference, says Heller, because the shroud, burial cloth of Christ or not, does not determine the validity of his faith.

"To me, a belief in Christ requires a leap of faith, and having made that leap, I don't need any bits or pieces of relics of any kind to affirm or deny my belief," says Heller, a member of Wilton Baptist Church. "My belief is in Christ crucified and Christ risen."

Still, says Heller, who entered Harvard at age 14 and graduated from its medical school at age 20, "As a scientific puzzle, this thing is almost irresistible."

Heller's expertise is in testing for the presence of elements in minute amounts. He was on the 32-member scientific research team that had 120 hours with the shroud in October 1978. He did determine the presence of blood on the shroud but the traces are so infinitesimal that sophisticated tests will be needed to determine if it is human blood.

"Initially we were...arrogantly confident that we would go in there with the best of our late 20th century scientific tools, and within a few hours, we'd spot a forgery," Heller says. "Well, it is now three and a half years later and we're just still talking to one another."

The shroud, venerated by many as the burial cloth of Jesus since the 14th century, never leaves Italy, where the Catholic Archbishop of Turin is its official guardian. It is displayed only two or three times each century. The research team lifted elements from the shroud with a sticky tape similar to that used at crime scenes.

They found an astonishingly detailed, straw-yellow, photographically negative image of a scourged, crucified man whose injuries parallel the biblical accounts of Jesus' crucifixion.

The similarities between the biblical accounts and the findings of the research team are so startling, in fact, that two members of the team, in a book not endorsed by the team, say it would be more of a miracle if the shroud were to be bogus than authentic.

Kenneth Stevenson and Gary Habemas, in "Verdict on the Shroud: Evidence for the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ" explained why a forgery would be nearly impossible:

"The artist would have had to have been one of the greatest who ever lived, a man capable of painting an image with the finest detail in a negative form. He would also have to know these medical facts many centuries before they were described by anatomists and pathologists: a severe chest beating can cause the pleural cavity to fill with a bloody fluid; this fluid would separate into two layers of heavy blood and lighter serum; a puncture through the fifth and sixth ribs would drain this cavity; a crucified man's abdomen would swell; the weight of a body can be supported on a cross if the arms are nailed through the space of Destot in the wrist; and this nail would likely sever the median nerve, causing the thumbs to cling tightly to the hand.

"This hypothetical artist would also have had to be daring enough to depart from Christian tradition in art by depicting Jesus nude, nailed through his wrists, wearing a cap of thorns covering the entire head, bearing approximately 120 scourge wounds, and wearing his hair in a pigtail. Finally, he would have to have had access to a Roman flagrum (three-pronged whip) and lancia (spear) so that he could draw wounds that would exactly correspond to these archaeological artifacts."

Stevenson and Habermas say the image was imprinted onto the shroud in a burst of heat and light at Jesus' resurrection. While neither Heller, nor most others on the team, will speak as certainly about the origin of the image, Heller says experiments did rule out the two most likely scientific explanations for the imprint: radiation and molecular transfer.

"If such a precise image got on the shroud by radiation, all the rays would have to be vertical up and vertical down," Heller says. "It couldn't glow like a light bulb. That wouldn't produce the fine image at all. That would be isotropic radiation and you wouldn't get an image. There's nothing we know or could find that beams light perpendicular and parallel.

"Molecular transport actually means molecules going from an image to the surface. For a variety of quantitative, kinetic and thermodynamic and other reasons, we have been able to rule out any molecular transport."

The science team is still waiting permission to conduct a carbon 14 dating test, which will require a tiny piece of the shroud be destroyed. Until then, most members are unwilling to try to date the shroud. A Loyola University theologian, Francis Filas, maintains the authenticity of the shroud is proven by an imprint of a rare coin in the right eye of the crucified figure that he says dates to 29 A.D.

Habermas and Stevenson aside, most team members refuse to speculate if the shroud is the cloth that covered Jesus the three days he was in the tomb. But none are reluctant to admit they are baffled by the image on the Shroud of Turin.

-30-

(BP) photo mailed to Baptist state newspapers.

Gospel Music Hall of Fame  
Inducts Noted Musician

CO

Baptist Press  
3/8/82

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The late B. B. McKinney, noted Southern Baptist musician, hymn composer and former secretary of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department, has been inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

Mrs. Leila McKinney, 92, the composer's widow, was presented to several thousand persons at the Gospel Music Association's Annual Dove Awards March 3 by Don Butler, executive director for the organization.

McKinney, who died in 1952, came to the board in 1935 as music editor. He became secretary of the newly formed church music department in 1941. He wrote more than 700 gospel hymns, children's songs and anthems.

Prior to his tenure at the Sunday School Board, McKinney was music director for Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and professor of music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He conducted music for hundreds of revival meetings and led music conferences throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

He was the editor and compiler of four hymnals and 19 song books. Among the many hymns McKinney composed are "Have Faith in God," "Wherever He Leads I'll Go," "He Lives on High," "Satisfied with Jesus," "The Nail-Scarred Hand" and "Let Others See Jesus in You."

McKinney is one of 27 listed in the deceased category of the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, along with such notables as Fanny Crosby and E. M. Bartlett.

-30-

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

Crisis Resolution Leaves  
Baptist Ministry Door Open

By Michael Tutterow

AB

ATLANTA (BP)--The two-year reign of terror that saw 29 young Atlanta blacks murdered drew Atlanta Baptists into more active roles in inner-city ministries, says Terry Moncrief, director of Clark Howell-Techwood Baptist Center. And, he adds, "It's just the beginning."

Moncrief is relieved that the crisis appeared resolved with the Feb. 27 conviction of Wayne B. Williams for the murders of Nathaniel Cater, 27, and Jimmy Ray Payne, 21. Authorities now claim Williams was responsible for 21 additional slayings, including the death of Eddie Duncan, 21, a regular at Techwood Center. Moncrief presided at his funeral last April.

Despite feelings of personal loss, Moncrief asserts the crisis proved God was "working to bring good in all things."

"The crisis opened people's eyes to the needs in our community," he explains. "It brought more people into the community to do what God intended, working on barriers that man had built that have long needed to come down."

At the height of the ordeal, Atlanta area churches responded to Techwood needs. Baptist Tabernacle, located near Techwood Homes where several of the murder victims had lived, First Baptist Church and Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church pooled resources with the Atlanta Baptist Association and several churches of various denominations to provide Techwood with volunteer workers, buses and vans for transportation and field trips.

During the summer, volunteers coordinated day camps to keep youth off the streets. When school resumed, more volunteers offered tutoring services both at the center and in local schools. The center now hosts literacy programs and recently began job readiness training.

Moncrief adds the crisis also enabled Techwood residents to "see their need for God." Several have made professions of faith and are now in discipleship training at local churches.

Freddie Mae Bason, director of Memorial Drive Baptist Center, echoes Moncrief's sentiments that the crisis drew churches together to meet inner-city Atlanta needs.

"It was a Christian problem," she asserts. "We needed to have someone there to minister to people in crisis, because our God is about that. The churches came together saying, 'We will take care of our children.'"

Bason says the two years of crisis left residents near the center suspicious of children's programs. Some of their fear may stem from the death of Lubie (Chuck) Geter, 14, a community youth and 15th victim in the Atlanta slayings. Geter also frequented Memorial Drive Center Bible studies and recreational activities.

"I no longer go into the community to ask kids to come to the center without their friends with me," says Bason. "The children remain very skeptical."

But Bason maintains the center will continue community programs with assistance from sponsoring Rainbow Park Baptist Church in Decatur. Rainbow Park helped provide recreation, Bible studies and meals to youth attending both Memorial Drive and Stewart Baptist Centers during the height of the crisis.

Bason suggested Baptists could further minister during periods of crisis through a "Christian Crime Scene Ministry," reporting needs of crime victims and providing "Christian" support and counsel to those involved in crimes.

Moncrief said despite the "tremendous trauma" endured by Atlanta communities, church cooperation demonstrated what "church is all about."

"Through crisis, people came to see their need for God; Christians saw their responsibility to reach out," he says. "Now there's a sense of explosive power for good. And it's just beginning."

Rumor Mill Cranks Out New  
'Church Regulation Bill'

By Stan Hastey

WB

WASHINGTON (BP)--Fueled by repeated publication in church newsletters, a new rumor is sweeping the nation that Congress is about to pass a "church regulation bill" which would impose racial and sexual quotas on churches.

Editors of state Baptist newspapers and other denominational executives have been besieged in recent weeks with inquiries from concerned pastors. But other ministers, unaware of the original source of the rumor, have published it without making inquiries about the accuracy of the information.

The rumor apparently was started by a right-wing organization, the National Christian Action Coalition, which reported in the February issue of its newsletter, Alert, that "the most dangerous piece of legislation ever, relating to church-state separation, is on its way to passage" in Congress.

Editor William Billings accused President Reagan of bowing to pressure from U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy and Speaker of the House of Representatives Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., in asking Congress to pass a bill "which would give the Internal Revenue Service broad new powers to tax, review and regulate churches which maintain Christian schools.

Billings also appealed for contributions to fight the legislation.

In Southern Baptist circles, objections to the bill apparently were started by John R. Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church of Houston.

In the Feb. 5 issue of the church's newsletter, The Orbit, Bisagno warned that "the purpose of the bill is to cut off the tax-exemption status of churches unless they have a certain percentage of women and minorities such as blacks and hispanics in places of leadership, and may make a certain percentage of homosexuals, possibly in ordained positions, mandatory."

Bisagno went on to declare that "it will be a cold day in August when the federal government has the right to dictate to you that your pastor must be black or white, male or female, heterosexual or homosexual."

Further, Bisagno wrote, passage of the bill would give IRS the right to collect taxes from church members on their tax-deductible contributions, retroactive to 1970.

All the information used in Bisagno's column came from the Billings newsletter, Baptist Press learned.

Bisagno told Baptist Press the article was based on "verbal information" given to him by a church member "who is very involved in conservative politics," who apparently got the data from the NCAC newsletter.

The Houston pastor said the article was "based on incomplete information. I based everything on the verbal information that this was a bill against churches. I was wrong because it is aimed at church schools and not at churches."

He said he continues to be concerned because "recent history reveals that this sort of thing does open the door...to churches. My fear is that the tax-exempt status we hold in common with private schools will be threatened."

The bill in question, S. 2024 in the Senate and H.R. 5313 in the House, was drafted by Reagan administration officials and sent to Congress Jan. 18, 10 days after an announcement that the IRS would no longer enforce regulations denying tax exemption to private schools which practice race discrimination in their admissions policies.

The Jan. 8 announcement, made jointly by the Departments of Treasury and Justice, provoked massive protests within the civil rights community, protests that apparently took the President

and top advisers by surprise. Reagan, declaring he is "unalterably opposed to racial discrimination in any form," then asked Congress to pass a bill specifically forbidding the granting of tax exemptions to such schools. This is the bill Billings dubbed the "church regulation bill."

On the legal front, the Jan. 8 announcement asked the U.S. Supreme Court to allow the government to withdraw from its cases against Bob Jones University and Goldsboro Christian Schools, cases which the high court had agreed last October to hear and decide.

But the Justice Department later reversed itself again, asking the high court Feb. 15 to hear the case after all.

In Congress, the latest legal move by the government in the Bob Jones and Goldsboro cases brought a collective sigh of relief from harried members caught in the crossfire of demands by uninformed pastors and church lay people to kill the bill and by Reagan administration officials eager to minimize political damage to the president.

According to numerous sources on Capitol Hill, the bill never stood much of a chance of passage. With the government's re-entering the Bob Jones and Goldsboro cases, by all accounts the measure is now dead.

But the rumors concerning its potential damage have not died in the churches.

-30-

Southern Seminary Picks  
New Presidential Cabinet

Baptist Press  
3/8/82

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--New president Roy L. Honeycutt has formed an eight-person team to help him chart the course of his administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Named were a presidential assistant, three vice presidents and four deans.

Bonnie Stowers, administrative assistant to former president Duke K. McCall since 1976, was named to the new post of assistant to the president, in charge of the executive office staff and special projects.

Badgett Dillard, a native North Carolinian who grew up in Georgia, was elected executive vice president, a new position. He will be chief operating officer in the president's absence. Otherwise, his duties are the same as vice president for business affairs, the title he held for almost 10 years.

Harold S. Songer, a Floridian, will fill the new post of vice president for academic affairs. He will oversee inter-school functions such as admissions, registration, academic records, library and the work of Boyce Bible School.

Wesley M. (Pat) Pattillo, a native of Alabama, will continue as vice president for development, responsible for directing Southern Seminary Foundation, fund raising, alumni relations, placement, college and church relations and communications.

In the new organizational structure, the office of provost, which Honeycutt occupied since 1976, was absorbed into responsibilities of the president. Honeycutt thus remains chief academic officer.

The four deans, who formerly reported to the provost, now will report directly to the president.

The school deans are Walter B. Shurden, theology; Jack H. McEwen, religious education; S. Milburn Price, church music. Elizabeth E. Lambert is dean of students.

These eight persons, each accountable to Honeycutt for a specific area of the seminary's life, will form the president's cabinet, a policy and planning team. They were approved by the school's trustees shortly after Honeycutt was named president.

-30-