



## - - BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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November 15, 1982

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Urban Evangelism Requires  
Focus On 'Deeper Issues'

By Michael Tutterow

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptists must address the "deeper issues" of educational, racial and economic injustice if they want to reach urban youth for Christ claimed a Southern Baptist evangelist from Boston.

Cliffe Knechtle addressed more than 50 persons attending the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's fall forum on urban evangelism. Knechtle, a staff evangelist with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, and a panel of youth leaders discussed problems confronting urban youth and proposed strategies for reaching a Southern Baptist Convention goal of baptizing 1.5 million youth by 1990.

Knechtle stressed the need for Baptist ministry to reflect "God's compassion for low-income people." He cited fear as a major deterrent to inner-city involvement, but emphasized "God has a heart for the city and a special concern for the oppressed, the exploited and the poor."

Knechtle warned against a "cultural Christianity" that produces professions of faith but "hasn't changed the way one behaves in business or in personal life." He added that "God is irate over the injustice rich folk have put on poor folk," and called for conference participants to stress biblical teachings on justice with more "clarity."

An understanding of biblical justice prompted Knechtle, a native of an affluent New York suburb, to move into inner-city Boston and minister among street people there, he said. Though he cited instances of suburban churches involved in the inner city, Knechtle asserted, "You don't minister in the inner city by living outside the city."

He called on church leaders to expose youth to inner-city missions and then "pray like the blitzes" that God will call some of them to live in the city.

"We must identify with the poor if we are to minister in the city with integrity," added Dale Cross, conference coordinator and director of the HMB's metropolitan evangelism strategy department. Cross attributed the lack of commitment to urban ministry to "an unwillingness to feel a part of something intimidating." But, he said, suburbanites must recognize by using city services they are intimately related to the city.

Cross said near 25 percent of urban residents are between early adolescence and age 19. Citing a recent Gallup Poll showing only seven percent of youth polled had never tried alcohol and 27 percent of youth surveyed used marijuana regularly, he expressed fear that urban problems were impacting youth faster than the church.

Cross added youth turn to drugs and materialism trying to find personal identity "because no one has ever called them to give themselves to God and to service." Knechtle encouraged leaders to involve youth in ministry to help them find themselves and substance to their faith. "We live in a spectator society and there's an attitude of 'I came to church to sit dormant and listen'," he warned.

Small group discussions focused on overcoming apathy among suburban youth and confronting materialism in the church. Sarah Lenier, staff member with YWAM (Youth with a Mission) in Amsterdam, Holland, claimed, "We're presenting kids with a baby-sitting program." She faulted youth programs that attempt to compete with "all the material things the world has to offer," and said they may bolster attendance but "the quality went out the window when the quantity came in."

David Benjamin, youth minister at the Church on Brady Street in Los Angeles, Calif., maintained it is not necessary to entertain kids to "get their attention. We don't understand that they will respond to challenge if we don't dull them with sugar."

Cross lamented that most youth stay with the church "not because it's exciting and relevant but because it's the thing mom and dad want them to do." He noted Southern Baptists gear most of their youth ministries toward those already in church and center activities around the "church house." Instead, he suggested, youth and their leaders must equip themselves to minister in the secular world.

Knechtle also stressed youth ministry must be taken out of the church building and into the streets. Integral to that strategy, he concluded, are youth willing to share their faith and stand for justice.

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Churches Should Teach More  
Than Tithing, Layman Says

By Patti Stephenson

Baptist Press  
11/15/82

TOCCOA, Ga. (BP)—Baptist churches must begin to teach members more about money matters than "what to do with just 10 percent of their income," according to Fred Roach, president of Texas Baptist Men and real estate developer in Dallas.

Speaking during the recent national renewal evangelism conference, Roach and Jimmie Monhollon, first vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank in Richmond, Va., addressed Christian perspectives on understanding and living with inflation.

Historically, Roach claimed, "Baptists have been a people who've never really worried about money because we didn't have any. Now we have churches and agencies responsible for handling millions of dollars," he added.

Roach, a member of Richardson Heights Baptist Church, urged churches to study the economy in order to "do the right thing" in providing for pastors as well as teaching members how to be wise stewards of their income.

The president of Centennial Homes observed, "God doesn't intend for everyone to become a millionaire," but of those who do, some are called to become a "conduit for giving," he continued, while some are to "use money to create jobs."

Monhollon, a member of Richmond's First Baptist Church, described inflation as "too much money chasing too few goods" and said the only way to lower interest rates is by controlling inflation.

He took issue, however, with those "concerned only with finding the most efficient way to control inflation rather than what should be done." Economic policy must not be divorced from its moral and social effects, he stated.

Monhollon also took exception to advocates allowing inflation to rise in order to lower double-digit unemployment. "In the long run all you do is raise both," he said.

The Federal Reserve Bank officer declared that living with 10 percent inflation "diminishes the ability of the American people to provide for their future themselves." The resulting vacuum forces citizens to turn to government for provision, inevitably destroying bulwarks of our society such as private ownership and free enterprise, he said.

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Mohollon observed one cause of inflation is assuming that "good intentions produce good results" when it comes to providing social services. Mohollon described social programs of the past two decades as a growing attempt to redistribute the economic pie more equally.

We could aid the poor more, he suggested, by following economic policies aimed at increasing the size of the pie, resulting in a "bigger slice for everybody."

Charging that "only government causes inflation and only government can cure it," Mohollon noted political preoccupation with short-term cures has hampered long-range solutions to inflation. "Reducing inflation is more like turning around a battleship than a motorboat," he said, urging citizens to hold elected leaders accountable for finding solutions to inflation.

Though he confessed he had been "deeply pessimistic" about the nation's economy during the 1970s, Mohollon concluded, "I now have reason to hope again," provided government "sticks to policies aimed at increasing productivity and growth of the gross national product."

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Missionaries Launch Relief  
For Returning Rwandans

By Dianne Randolph

Baptist Press  
11/15/82

KIGALI, Rwanda (BP)—Southern Baptist missionaries in Rwanda are working to ease the plight of thousands of displaced persons pouring into the small East African nation across its northern border with Uganda.

Sketchy news reports indicate the ethnic Rwandans living in Uganda—many residents for more than 20 years—apparently were evicted without notice. Reasons are not clear.

On an initial trip to one of two camps they surveyed, Southern Baptist missionaries Crawford Keese of Rwanda and Fred Sorrells of neighboring Burundi, brought back a woman who had given premature birth to an incredibly small baby en route to Rwanda. The woman had no clothing to cover her body. The missionaries clothed her and took her to a hospital where the baby was treated for bronchial pneumonia. But help came too late. The baby died.

They also reported finding a small child, about five years old, wandering around camp crying. He was lost and couldn't speak any of the languages of the people in the camp. The missionaries gave him food and clothing but have little hope of finding his parents. They believe he was brought by mistake.

Officials in Kigali, Rwanda, reported the continuing influx had reached 30,000 by late October and appealed for food, clothing and medicine to help cope with the problem. Rwanda is already one of the most densely populated countries in Africa with a population of more than five million squeezed into an area the size of Maryland.

United Nations officials say about 1,000 people a day continue to cross the border and estimate about 120,000 people may eventually return to Rwanda, according to John R. Cheyne, the Foreign Mission Board's senior human needs consultant.

The Baptist Mission of Rwanda, an organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in the country, is using \$10,000 of relief funds from the Foreign Mission Board to distribute medicine, clothing and soap in cooperation with the Rwandan government. They are using \$65,000 of hunger relief funds to purchase food and utensils for preparing and distributing food. Some food and water is available.

The Baptist Union of Rwanda has provided two volunteer teams to help tackle the problem. One, under Keese's supervision, is building a base camp where various relief agencies will store supplies. The other is organizing worship services and other ministries for the camp residents.

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Meanwhile, plans call for housing the displaced people in permanent camps. The mission and the union will assess what ministries they can provide on a long-term basis.

"We have found severe needs and the Baptist mission will give as much aid as possible using the hunger and relief funds generously donated by Southern Baptists," missionary Larry Randolph of Rwanda said. "Please pray for us and these thousands of people."

Rwanda, a former Belgian trust territory, is a land-locked nation bordered by Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire. Southern Baptists began working there in 1977 after the Union of Baptist Churches of Rwanda invited them to assist the union and Danish Baptist missionaries already there.

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(Dianne Randolph, Southern Baptist missionary to Rwanda, is press representative for the Baptist mission of Rwanda.)

Colorado Baptists Hike  
Cooperative Program Gifts

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WHEAT RIDGE, Colo. (BP)—Colorado Baptists upped their convention's contributions to the Cooperative Program by one percent, postponed constitutional changes for another year and met the new editor of the Rocky Mountain Baptist at their annual meeting.

Messengers to the Colorado Baptist General Convention approved a budget of \$2,351,493 for the coming year with \$1,332,493 coming from the congregations in Colorado and the remainder from national Southern Baptist Convention agencies, primarily the Home Mission Board. Twenty-eight percent of the collections will be sent to national and worldwide SEC mission causes through the national level agencies.

The relationship among the CBGC, the Colorado Baptist Loan Corp. and the Baptist Foundation of Colorado has been a focus of attention for several months but messengers postponed enacting changes in the convention's constitution that would spell out those relationships in detail.

The directors of the two corporations were instructed to study the proposed restructuring in consultation with Glen Braswell executive director-treasurer of the CBGC and Bill Landers president of both corporations under the present structure and report their recommendations to the executive board at its April 1983, meeting. Final action is expected to be taken at the 1983 state convention Nov. 8-10, at the First Southern Baptist Church of Colorado Springs.

Don Turner, 33, pastor of First Baptist Church in Midkiff, Texas, will assume the editor's job of the Rocky Mountain Baptist some time in December.

He earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from Baylor University and a master of divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. Braswell has been serving as interim editor of the publication since last June when editor James Young resigned.

Benny J. King, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of North Glenn, was elected president of the CBGC; Don Murray, pastor of Ken Caryl Baptist Church in Littleton, was elected first vice president and Steve Spencer, minister of music at Arapaho Road Baptist Church in Littleton was elected second vice president.

Eight new churches were accepted into the convention raising the total number of congregations in the convention to 212.

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## Michigan Baptists Adopt First \$2 Million Budget

LANSING, Mich. (BP)—The Baptist State Convention of Michigan celebrated its 25th anniversary at Bethany Baptist Church of Lansing Nov. 9-11.

The theme of the convention, "By Their Fruits," was taken from the name of the history book Arthur L. Walker Jr. has written for the convention. Walker, executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention Education Commission, was on hand to autograph 500 copies of the just-released book.

The convention has grown from 53 congregations to more than 300 including missions. The 802 messengers were joined by hosts of out-of-state visitors, including former executive director Fred Hubbs and half dozen other former state staffers: Hal Crane, Bob Stidham, Pat McDaniel, Francis Dubose, Kenneth Day and W.B. Oakley. James Smith and Carolyn Weatherford represented the Baptist Men and Woman's Missionary Union, respectively.

The messengers adopted a budget of \$2,180,000--the convention's first budget over \$2 million. Member churches of the BSCM will contribute \$960,000 of that budget with 26 percent of that amount being sent to national level agencies to underwrite mission and educational work worldwide. This is the 12th year in a row Michigan Baptists have increased their SEC amount by one-half percent.

Two employees, Robert Wilson, executive director and Joe Watson, director of the church development division, were honored for 25 years of service. Elected president was Joe Hall, pastor of Forest Park Baptist Church of Farmington Hills. Ray Babb was elected first vice president. Carl Petty was chosen second vice president.

The 1983 annual meeting will be Nov. 8-10 at Immanuel Baptist Church of Grand Rapids.

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## BGCT Messengers Give \$10,000 Love Offerings

Baptist Press  
11/15/82

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas (BP)—The annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas was saddened by two deaths during the sessions in Corpus Christi.

On Nov. 9, the opening day, William Prater died of a heart attack. The 46-year-old pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Monahans, Texas, was survived by his wife and two children.

The following day Ulise Thibodeaux, 40-year-old manager of Palacios Baptist Encampment, was killed in a car accident at Rockport, Texas, as he was driving to the convention. H was survived by his wife and four children.

The tradedies were shared with the more than 3,500 people attending the BGCT session and a love offering of \$10,600 was collected to be given to the families of the two men.

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**CORRECTION**--In the (BP) story "West Virginia Accepts Out-of-State Churches" released 11/9/82 two items need to be clarified. In the fourth paragraph, the total amount that West Virginia will send to the Cooperative Program will be \$97,264 which is 22.5 percent of the \$432,290 which the West Virginia churches will contribute to the budget.

In the 12th paragraph, Floyd Tidsworth called (BP) to explain that his role in the three-way phone conversation was just to provide Riner with information on the procedure to follow if he wished to apply for membership to the West Virginia convention. Tidsworth said Art Ballard placed the call and that at no time did he (Tidsworth) ask Riner to apply for membership.

Thanks, BP