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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Brotherhood Begins  
Two Year Program Study**

By Mike Davis

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--The coming of the "information age," a possible split of the Southern Baptist Convention and further complexities in attracting volunteers were some of the predictions offered Dec. 13-16 to a select panel trying to project the direction of Brotherhood work to the year 2000.

IMPACT 2000, made up of state Brotherhood leaders and Brotherhood staff members, began a two-year study with a marathon input session in Memphis featuring authorities in culture, education, missions, religion, ethics, volunteerism and religious and missions education.

Nolan Estes, director of graduate studies in education, University of Texas, predicted microcomputers will be the most important trend facing America in the next 10 years. The coming of microcomputers--the information age--promises to change the entire social and economic fabric of our society, he contends.

Estes, a Baptist layman and former Royal Ambassador director, credited the Royal Ambassador program with giving him many of the values which he carried into manhood but suggested that work with boys must keep pace with the microcomputer explosion which is taking place in education and other areas of American life.

"You might even project making microcomputers available with your missions magazines," he suggested, adding that in Houston by 1985 students will do 50 percent of their homework with microcomputers.

Estes explained the Brotherhood Commission and other SBC agencies must be aware of the magnitude of the change which is being brought about by the transition from the print media to electronic media.

"Churches have to provide the leadership if we are going to control the new technology instead of being controlled by it," Estes told the panel, adding the Brotherhood Commission, especially in the Royal Ambassador program, could help youth clarify their values and help young people cope with change.

Foy Valentine, executive director of the SBC Christian Life Commission noted a moral breakdown in America. "Without recovery of spiritual ideals, moral value, honesty, integrity, character, the worth of persons," he told the panel, "our country will not have much of an agenda." Valentine suggested Brotherhood leaders consider the crisis in family life a priority in their deliberations.

Bill O'Brien, executive vice president of the Foreign Mission Board, outlined some trends in missions with which the FMB will deal, including developing an urban strategy for world evangelization.

"World population patterns will move from rural to urban in this decade and the most successful groups will be those who design and utilize urban strategy to meet the new urban masses," O'Brien said.

The most critical need Southern Baptists face in their foreign missions program during the '80s, according to O'Brien, is in the developing of church and denominational leadership beginning at the grass roots level.

"The answer will begin by modeling the role of an enabler and an equipper and continuing systematic discipleship training," he explained.

Church historian Bill Leonard of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary told the group any consideration of the next 10 or 20 years should include the discussion of a possible split in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Leonard did not predict a split but noted if the convention stayed on its present course of controversy a split could be possible.

"As ideologists on the right gain increasing control of the convention agencies and seek to impose varying degrees of theological uniformity, schism becomes increasingly inestimable," Leonard said.

He listed three ways the convention could respond to the current controversy. One would be a split. Another could be for denominational leaders to try traditional methods of uniting the convention with "nebulous slogans and watchwords, refusing to confront the reality of a denominational identity and impending split."

A third response, Leonard offered, would be to seek a new denominationalism which allows for a classic unity in diversity which is characteristic of Southern Baptists. Leonard added the convention's local autonomy and concern for missions might be keys to avoiding a split.

Charles Petty, aide to the governor of North Carolina in the area of volunteerism, praised the Brotherhood Commission for the men and boys work it has provided. Petty, a Royal Ambassador volunteer in the First Baptist Church of Raleigh, thanked the commission for what it had contributed to the lives of men and boys but warned that the commission and other agencies who rely on volunteers must become more sophisticated in recruiting volunteers.

Given the competition from groups of all kinds for volunteers, Petty urged the panel to look for new and better ways of recruiting and recognizing volunteers for their work.

Other speakers, including Jerry Michel, chairman of the department of sociology at Memphis State University; Rex Enoch, director of international studies at Memphis State University; Dean Hoge, professor of sociology, Catholic University, Washington, D.C.; James Hyde, director of the family life counseling center at Baptist Hospital in Fayetteville, N.C., and Bill Clemmons, professor of missions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, outlined trends in religious admissions education, culture, society and human development.

IMPACT 2000 will study Baptist Men and Royal Ambassador programs in light of the December input and in light of input from a session scheduled for April 1983 and will make recommendations for program modification to the Brotherhood Commission in 1985.

State Brotherhood leaders involved in the study include Lloyd Jackson, Virginia, co-chairman of IMPACT 2000; Bob Dixon, Texas; Kenny Rains, Tennessee; Ron Martin, Ohio; David Langford, North Carolina; Paul McCullough, Oklahoma; Gene Daily, Georgia; Cliff Saterwhite, South Carolina, and Cal Jones, Louisiana.

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Sunday School Growth  
Is Anderson's Priority

By Linda Lawson

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--When Andy Anderson talks about growing churches through the Sunday School, he is one-part salesman, one-part motivator and two-parts evangelist.

Anderson, growth specialist in the Sunday School department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, travels 40 weeks a year promoting and interpreting Super Spiral, an accelerated growth plan for increasing Sunday School enrollment.

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The plan also emphasizes corresponding increases in qualitative areas such as number of workers and units and workers earning training awards and attending weekly workers meetings.

Anderson, who has a way of communicating important truths in easy-to-remember phrases, emphasizes to each group of church leaders considering the Super Spiral, "When God's people do God's work, God always furnishes the baggage.

"God gives us what we need to get the job done," says Anderson with ministerial firmness, a reflection of 30 years as a Southern Baptist pastor. "We need to attack the job and not worry about how it's going to be done."

The approximately 300 churches now participating in the Super Spiral are rolling up impressive gains in both quantitative and qualitative areas. Preliminary fall reports from 172 churches show a six-month new enrollment increase of 24,816 or an average of 150 per church.

In California, 51 churches reported a net enrollment gain of 6,093--more than one-half of the state's projected increase of 11,500.

In their first year on the Super Spiral most churches are doubling their baptisms which, Anderson stresses repeatedly, is the bottom line of any church growth effort.

In Super Spiral support strategies, Anderson sets forth ways for planning, organizing and reorganizing the Sunday School and visiting and enrolling people.

First, he says, establish a ratio of one worker for every eight Sunday School members. "When your worker ratio is more than 1 to 10 there is no ministry taking place in your Sunday School," Anderson warns. "If you can't disciple people you have no right to win them."

On enlisting people to work in the Sunday School, he believes, "One of the reasons workers today don't stick is that we haven't prayed them in. We've invited them in."

Second, Anderson advocates establishing a ratio of one Sunday School unit for every 18 members. "Go home and start teaching units like your salvation depends on it. Someone's salvation does," he insists.

Third, he urges every church in the Super Spiral to start one new mission every year. "We need 475,000 Southern Baptists in the United States today just to reach the people," he said.

Fourth, Anderson feels churches must have adequate space but quickly notes most churches can register a 15 percent gain in space just by cleaning house.

"At \$30 to \$50 a square foot you don't need to have junk in Sunday School rooms," he points out. "You can haul anything away from a Southern Baptist church except the pulpit furniture and the pews. Nobody knows what's there. Don't keep people from coming to church because of junk."

Fifth, Anderson says a church should have an up-to-date list of prospects equal to its Sunday School enrollment.

Above all, he urges, "Learn to think outside the lines. If you do everything traditionally you'll have a hard time growing a church."

Anderson first became known in the mid-70s for a concept of open enrollment in Sunday School which he introduced in his church, Riverside of Fort Myers, Fla. Called ACTION, the idea of enrolling people whenever and wherever they agree to become a member has been implemented in thousands of Southern Baptist churches.

After joining the board in 1975 Anderson introduced the Growth Spiral, a marriage of ACTION and the Flake Formula for Sunday School growth. In 1980 he began testing the concept of Super Spiral, an expanded and accelerated use of the Growth Spiral.

Because he sets numerical goals in every area of Sunday School work, Anderson is sometimes criticized for being too numbers conscious, a charge he answers unapologetically.

"There are people today who are trying to make second-class citizens of people who care about numbers," he said. "How can you weigh development or growth if you don't do it with numbers? I'm a mathematician by birth. When I see an abstract I automatically translate it into math."

That Anderson also readily translates numbers back into people is evident when he emphasizes, "God never put us in the percentage business. He put us in the ministry business."

While Anderson seldom fails to build excitement among participants in the semi-annual workshops which participating church leaders must attend, he urges caution as they return home. "Learn to plod," he urges. "Avoid burnout or leading people faster than they can go."

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(BP) photos mailed to Baptist state papers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press

Remember Constituency,  
Hopkins Warns SBC Schools

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ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist colleges and schools that best know and respond to their constituency have been and will continue to be prosperous, a Southern Baptist college president told educators.

Mark L. Hopkins, president of Anderson College in Anderson, S.C., addressed some 100 college presidents and deans at the midyear meeting of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools in Atlanta.

"Colleges have to be careful not to become convinced they are in the liberal arts business or in the teaching of foreign language business ... when, in fact, we are in the business of responding to the needs of our constituency through education," Hopkins said.

He noted colleges may be guilty of attacking the symptoms of problems instead of dealing with specifics.

Hopkins said declining enrollments are often dealt with by putting greater investment into the admissions or development offices when the problem could be the programs and courses are no longer responsive to the constituency.

"We have a tendency because of the age and stability of faculty to continue teaching subjects year after year because they have been taught successfully before without taking a look on a regular basis to see whether or not the course or program is necessary."

Southern Baptist college presidents and administrators must resolve to do a better job of planning than ever before, Hopkins continued.

"We should not just sit down with our own staffs and decide on next year's goals and objectives, but we should send representatives to talk with our primary constituency (Southern Baptist churches) and ask them what their needs are," he said.

Hopkins emphasized Southern Baptist "churches and church families are the lifeblood" of Southern Baptist educational institutions.

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Action, Knowledge, Reflection  
Basic To Growth, Professors Say

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WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Action, knowledge and reflection are the three basic elements of growth in faith, according to William P. Clemmons, G. Thomas Halbrooks and Bruce P. Powers, professors at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

They chose the topic "Coming to and Growing in Faith: Historical Development" for their two-day joint presentation at Southeastern.

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Initially the three professors surveyed the methods used in dealing with faith development since the beginnings of the Christian church. "The early church developed a complex of foundational experiences by which persons were brought to faith: worship, the catechumenate and baptism," they said. "After bringing them to the faith relationship the early church launched them into the process of growth in faith emphasizing good works (Christian action) but also including knowledge and reflection."

The church of the Middle Ages, they continued, "developed a ladder of perfection in which the laity was limited primarily to one means of growth in faith--good works." But the reformers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "dismantled the ladder of perfection and sought to restore a balance in the three means of growth: knowledge, action, reflection."

Baptists in the nineteenth century "stressed dramatic conversion and placed little emphasis on growth in faith." When Baptists later began to think about how Christians grow in faith, at first most "tended to answer in terms of physical and intellectual maturation."

Some others, though, said "growth in faith is purely spiritual" and began "to construct processes for Christian growth drawn from interpretations of the Bible centered primarily around the removal of sin and a movement toward holiness," the lecturers said.

Clemmons, Powers and Halbrooks then looked at the problems of Southern Baptist religious educators today in "the process of enlisting and developing Christians."

"We are discovering our need to describe precisely the model on which we will base our process of bringing persons to, and guiding their growth in, faith." They said, cautioning, "if one is invited to 'just believe' with no corresponding call to a lifelong journey of faith then our evangelism is suspect. Bonhoeffer (a noted theologian) called it 'cheap grace.'"

The professors feel religious education today is caught between two extremes--that which stresses psychology and human development totally and that which would say "Christian growth is strictly a spiritual concern."

The second emphasis has "created a second 'zap' process of Christian maturity beyond conversion called being 'Spirit-filled' and saying the capacity for giving a verbal witness to another person is the primary mark of Christian maturity."

The spiritual growth triangle of knowledge, reflection and action, they pointed out, "is influenced by the uniqueness of the individual, the maturation life-cycle, our communities of faith, the places where we live, work and play, the general world setting we find ourselves in historically and culturally and our openness in all these areas to the Holy."

"Christian growth may be stated as enabling persons to become whole in the best biblical, theological sense of that word," they added. "This is a process begun in conversion where one experiences new life in Christ and is committed to a continual opening of one's life to God in many transformations."

The trio thinks the task of Southern Baptist religious educators is "to enable this process. We must face with diligence in the next decade the model on which we build our faith development process. It must take into account our particular Baptist understandings of faith and at the same time be placed squarely on solid footings in the sciences of human behavior."

"It must continue to emphasize conversion as a beginning but equally be serious about the commitment to a lifetime of deep inward, outward and corporate changes as one is confronted daily with the Gospel demands."