



-- FEATURES
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Staunch Atheist Becomes
Loyal Sunday School Teacher

By Lucille Davis
As Told To Robert Hastings

BELLEVILLE, Ill. (BP)--As a child I never attended church. If my parents had tried to force me--which they didn't--I would have refused. Religion was not on my agenda, although my mother was a nominal member of an Evangelical and Reformed church. Daddy was a "free thinker," who accepted Christ on his deathbed.

I grew up on a farm, just north of Freeburg (Ill.). Since 1946 my husband and I have lived across the highway from my birthplace in a log home built about 1830. We love the soil, the open places, the scenes of my childhood.

By the time I entered the University of Illinois in 1934, my atheism was crystallized. Oh, I believed in upright living. And though I was an unbeliever, I never feared dying. I was one of the few at the university who didn't drink or smoke. I saw little difference in the students who went to church and those who didn't.

Back then, the sororities and student housing sponsored a once-a-month "go to church" Sunday. I went here and there--Catholic, Presbyterian, but no Baptist church. I decided the Unitarians fitted me best, for they quoted Descartes and Socrates.

I got my degree in fine arts at the U of I, where I met Howard who was studying mechanical engineering. We married in 1939, followed by five years in the military, in which I followed him here and there, except overseas. But we never went to the base chapels--wouldn't if anyone had asked us, which they didn't. After World War II, we settled on our farm and Howard worked at Scott AFB as a mechanical engineer for 20 years.

Just three miles up the highway from us is Eckhert's Orchard Association. I knew Vernon Eckhert when both of us were growing up. Juanita, his wife, began taking our children to Westview Baptist Church in Belleville. Then Pastor and Mrs. Eugene T. Pratt started visiting us. One month, he came every Saturday. You just couldn't get rid of him, but I've ordered more than one minister off our place. There was something different about Juanita that touched me--she had something I didn't. It must have been intercessory prayer that changed me.

One Saturday Juanita gave me a gospel tract. I read it and said to my husband, "You know, these Baptist ideas aren't too bad, especially about not having to belong to a church to be saved." That night, upstairs in our bedroom, I accepted Christ.

The next morning we drove into Belleville to Westview Baptist Church and Dr. Pratt talked about tithing. I'd never heard the word, never seen anyone baptized or make a public profession of faith. But I went forward that morning and surrendered everything. From then on, my world changed. My family turned against me and mother blamed Dr. Pratt for leading us into the Baptist faith. She never mellowed in her attitude toward my new religion.

One thing that had stood in my way was a footnote I read in a Bible during my student days. It said the date for Creation was 4,004 B.C., and my study of rocks and fossils told me better. They shouldn't add notes like that, but let the Word of God speak for itself.

One of my greatest pleasures was helping to start a Baptist church in Freeburg. In 1955, Westview was sponsoring a mission there and my husband and I bought the old grade school for services. The church had no money at the time, so we chipped in and borrowed and bought it--then sold it back to them interest-free.

I led the first Vacation Bible School at Freeburg--which was also my first. That was about like my first cottage prayer meeting. I didn't even know that was where you went to pray! Dr. Pratt enlisted me as a Sunday school teacher six months after I was saved. I studied everything I could find about Baptists and the Bible, including seminary extension courses taught by Eugene Daily, as well as my own pastor.

I love my church, my Lord, my neighbors, my country. God is good. He helped me see the light through a dedicated neighbor who lived her faith during the week, as well as on Sundays. I hope I can influence others the same way.

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(Robert Hastings is editor of the Illinois Baptist.)

Don Harbuck Addresses
CLC National Seminar

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press
4/6/83

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Christian living in the modern world means getting "back to basics" of servanthood, an Arkansas pastor told the annual national seminar of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Don Harbuck, pastor of First Baptist Church, El Dorado, Ark., spoke on the seminar theme, "Discipleship and Ethics" in the keynote address.

"What is the basic style and thrust of Christian living?" Harbuck asked. "We are to be servants. Servanthood and submission belong to a whole circle of ideas in the New Testament ethic." Jesus "lived among us as one who serves," and "summons us to do the same." He described Christian servanthood through a "new servant song" of six stanzas.

The first stanza "respect others," follows the model of God, who "respects all people." True servanthood means respecting other people because they are the special targets of God's love and because all human life has eternal value, he added.

"Respond to others," is the second stanza. "Jesus did that," Harbuck explained. "He made our needs his agenda. He took people where he found them and confronted them with saving possibilities." This is the pattern of presenting a "gateway to God" which should be followed by Christians today, he claimed.

"Rejoice others" is the third stanza but he admitted the use of "rejoice" is "awkward for us.... We search for ways to make ourselves happy and end up sad and frustrated. The sadness of our alienation seeps into the spirit and poisons the heart." Yet "nothing spreads the faith more authentically than rejoicing."

The next stanza is "reconcile others," for "the most embracing biblical term for Christ's saving work is 'reconciliation.' Jesus is in the business of bringing wholeness to people's lives in a broken world and eventually of healing the brokenness of the world itself," he said.

"The work of reconciliation can be carried forward only by servants who practice the difficult business of forgiveness--forgiveness offered and received, he said. The "sickness and shallowness of both the world and the church" are caused by the "trivializing of forgiveness," and he said, noting forgiveness is necessary for understanding both sin and redemption.

However Harbuck cautioned against concentrating on reconciliation to the extent that the fifth stanza of the song--"resist the enemies of the people"--is forgotten. "The Christian lifestyle of servant or submission is not another word for spinelessness," he insisted. "Meekness is no synonym for weakness."

Harbuck challenged Christians to stand up for the oppressed and defeated, noting Jesus drove moneychangers from the temple in a defiant act against wrongdoing.

The final stanza of the new servant song is "reveal to people their destinies." Harbuck reminded Christians their name and their identity was received from Christ, and challenged them to "be the servants of others by revealing who they are."

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However, this should not be done through judgments and condemnation, he advised. "Jesus has forbidden us to judge one another. Though our criticisms may be technically correct, they are never redemptive. They are counterproductive."

Consequently, the process of revealing destinies should be done through affirmation, Harbuck claimed. "The servant," he said, "sees beyond what people think and say and do and sees even beyond what they are--to what they can become."

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New Sunday Schools
Set Record Pace

Baptist Press
4/6/83

NASHVILLE (BP)--Sunday school starts are setting a record pace for the first six months of the 1982-83 church year with 563 new Sunday schools reported through March 31.

At this time last year 525 new Sunday schools had been reported, according to James Lackey, growth consultant in the Sunday school department of the Baptist Sunday School Board. The goal for the year is 1,000.

Texas is leading all states with 138 new Sunday schools reported. The state goal for the year is 200. Florida is second with 82 starts reported toward a goal of 100.

Other states which are more than halfway toward their goals for the year are: Arizona (28 starts with a goal of 50), Nevada (8 of 13), Northwest (18 of 30), Oklahoma (36 of 57) and Pennsylvania-South Jersey (21 of 28). Mississippi has already exceeded its goal of 15 by two.

Lackey said July 1983 has been designated Start a New Sunday School Month. He expects many churches which commit themselves on Pentecost Sunday, May 22, to starting a new church or mission will begin that work in July with a new Sunday school. Pentecost Sunday is a project of the Home Mission Board in which it is hoped Southern Baptist churches will make a commitment in May to start at least 3,000 new churches in 1983-84.

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Woman Calls Seminary,
Discovers Savior

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Lots of people who call the registrar's office want to know about courses taught at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

But A. Jay McCollum Jr., a student assistant in the office, sensed something special in the voice of a woman who asked about Bible courses. She wanted to know what the Bible said.

"We talked for 15 minutes," said McCollum, a master of divinity student. "She had no knowledge of who Jesus Christ was or what he had done. I shared a gospel witness with her and told her how to ask Christ into her heart. She couldn't pray because she was on her break at work. So I asked her to pray when she got home."

The next week McCollum visited the woman in her home as part of his church's outreach program. He noticed her Bible laying open on the sofa as she told him she had done as he said and had asked Jesus to be her savior.

McCollum, from Port Arthur, Texas, said such calls and visits are not uncommon in the registrar's office at Southwestern. "People come into registration wanting to know what kind of job they can get with an education from here," he said. "They ask what Southwestern is about and I tell them about Jesus Christ and that he is why we're here."

Not every experience is as immediately fruitful as McCollum's telephone conversation and subsequent visit. "That one experience has been the highlight of working at Southwestern for me," he said. "I graduate in May and that will be one of the sweetest memories I'll have." No doubt it will leave a sweet memory in the mind of a young Christian in Fort Worth, as well.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH MUSIC CONFERENCE
June 11-13, 1983
First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

June 10-12, 1983

Pittsburgh Convention/Exposition Center
Pre-Conference Sessions and SBC Handbell Festival

Saturday Afternoon, June 11, 1983

4:00--Executive Council Meeting--University Inn
6:30--Executive Council Dinner

Sunday Afternoon, June 12, 1983 Session I

12:30--Past President's Luncheon
1:30--Registration--First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh
Music Exhibits Open--First Baptist Church
3:00--Opening Session--Al Washburn, professor of organ and chairman, division church music ministries, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, LA presiding; coordinator Truitt Roberts, local church representative east
Pre-session concert--John and Mary Giger, Dallas, TX
Call to order--Al Washburn
Hymn of Praise
Welcome--Harold Price, church music director, Pennsylvania-So. Jersey Baptist Convention
Greetings and invocation--Nathan Williams, pastor, First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh
3:10--Handbell Choir, First Baptist Church, Gaffney, SC, Robert Sutter, director
3:30--Worship--R. Quinn Pugh, director of Metro missions, New York Baptist Association, NY
4:00--Mini-concert--Choir of First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, Mary Louise Wright, organist-director
4:30--Address--"The Minister of Music as Educator," Mabel Warkentin Sample, professor of music, Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
5:00--Benediction, exhibit break and dinner

Sunday Evening, June 12, 1983 Session II

Al Washburn presiding; coordinator J.M. Wood, local church representative east
7:30--Worship, R. Quinn Pugh
7:50--Choral Techniques, Elaine Brown, director Singing Cities, Philadelphia, PA
8:45--Offertory--Handbell Choir
8:55--Mini-concert--Sanctuary Choir, Park Cities Baptist Church, Dallas, TX
Charley Worley, director
9:30--Benediction and reception

Monday Morning, June 13, 1983 Session III

Jack Coldiron, vice president, education division presiding; Harlan Hall, vice president, local church division coordinator
8:30--Prelude--Betty Jean Chatham, concert pianist, Shelbyville, KY
8:45--Worship--R. Quinn Pugh
9:10--Address--"Challenges of a Bivocational Music Director," Rick Coleman, minister of music Redland Baptist Church, Rockville, MD
9:30--Mini-concert--Youth choirs of Peters Creek Baptist Church, Library, PA, David Ballbach, director and Monroeville Baptist Church, Denny Pyles, director;
9:55--Annual Business Session
10:15--Exhibit Break
10:50--Commissioned Work performed by instrumental ensemble--Monroeville Baptist Church, Denny Pyles, director; Peters Creek Baptist Church, David Ballbach, director
11:00--Address--"The Minister of Music as Educator," Mabel Warkentine Sample
11:30--Mini-recital--Robert Sutter, organist
11:50--Lunch

Monday Afternoon, June 13, 1983 Session IV

John McGuckin, denominational division west presiding; coordinator James Allcock, denominational division east
1:30--Prelude--Betty Jean Chatham
1:35--Choral techniques--Elaine Brown

- 2:30--President's address
 2:45--Exhibit break
 3:15--Divisional meetings--Local church, Harlan Hall presiding; Denominational, Charles Storey presiding; Educational, Jack Coldiron presiding
 4:00--Mini-concert--The Singing Men of North Carolina, Charles Gatwood, director
 4:30--Hymnic Monologue--Mayrene Bobbitt, Florida State music director, Jacksonville, FL
 4:45--Address--"Music Drama in the Church," Carl Gerbrandt, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY
 5:15--Dinner

Monday Evening, June 13, 1983 Session V

- Al Washburn presiding; coordinator Leroy Summers, local church representative west
 7:30--Prelude--Robert Sutter, organist
 7:45--Worship--R. Quinn Pugh
 8:10--Introduction of new officers
 8:20--Musical drama--"A Gift of Song" by Mary Elizabeth Caldwell (Boosey & Hawkes)
 Sacred music drama workshop, Carl Gerbrandt director
 9:30--Benediction, Fes Robertson new president, Nashville, TN

Church Music Conference Officers 1983

- Al Washburn, president; professor of organ and chairman division of church music ministries, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA
 Charles Storey, vice president denominational division; associate church music department of Baptist Convention of North Carolina, Raleigh, NC
 Harlan Hall, vice president local church division; minister of music, First Baptist Church, Longview, TX
 Jack Coldiron, vice president music educators division; professor of voice, Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, TX
 Mary June Tabor, secretary-treasurer; associate music secretary, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK
 Fes Robertson, president elect; church music department, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, TN

Baptist Music Conference
 Sets Pittsburgh Meeting

Baptist Pr ss
 4/6/83

PITTSBURGH, Pa. (BP)--Views of "The Minister of Music as Educator," "Challenges of a Bivocational Music Director" and "Music Drama In the Church" will provide counterpoint to plenty of music at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference.

The group will hold its 27th meeting at the First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh June 11-13 prior to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Pittsburgh. Pre-conference sessions and an SBC Handbell Festival will be held June 10-12 at the Pittsburgh Convention/Exposition Center.

Mabel Warkentin Sample, professor of music at Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pa., will speak twice on the minister of music as educator; Rick Coleman, minister of music at Redland Baptist Church in Rockville, Md., will discuss challenges of a bivocational music director and Carl Gerbrandt, a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., will talk on music drama in the church.

Other major program features include presentation of the musical drama "A Gift of Song" and a sacred music drama workshop conducted by Gerbrandt; concerts by the handbell choir of First Baptist Church in Gaffney, S.C., the choir of First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, the sanctuary choir of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, the combined youth choirs of Peters Creek Baptist Church in Library, Pa. and Monroeville Baptist Church in Monroeville, Pa., the Singing Men of North Carolina, organist Robert Sutter and by John and Mary Giger of Dallas.

An instrumental ensemble from Monroeville Baptist Church and Peter's Creek Baptist Church will present a commissioned work to the group; Elaine Brown, director of Singing Cities in Philadelphia, will give two presentations on choral techniques; Mayren Bobbitt, music director at Florida State University, will present a hymnic monologue; and Quinn Pugh, director of metropolitan missions in N w York City will lead the worship times.