

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Christian Life Commission Gives
Ethics Award To Billy Graham**

By Tim Fields

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has presented its Distinguished Service Award to evangelist Billy Graham for his outstanding contributions in applied Christianity.

Foy Valentine, executive director of the commission, and the six members of the commission's executive committee presented the award to Graham just prior to the second service of the Central Florida Billy Graham Crusade at the Tangerine Bowl here.

Valentine told Graham the moral concerns agency selected him to receive the award in recognition of his leadership in such Christian social ethics areas as race, peace and public righteousness.

"We are presenting you with this plaque because you have been a faithful preacher of the whole gospel of God in Christ," Valentine told Graham. "You have emphasized in your preaching the divine imperative both to practice and to preach the whole gospel. You have been an authentic advocate of personal morality of the finest kind."

Valentine also lauded Graham as a "mighty voice for public righteousness" and "a consistent proponent of personal morality of the finest kind."

"For what you have done with your own children, in your own home and in your preaching on family life, we honor you," Valentine said.

Graham was also praised as a trailblazer in race relations, as a powerful advocate of peace with justice and as a sensitive world citizen and Christian statesman.

"You have been a prophetic spokesman for the Christian way in race relations," Valentine said. "We remember from your earliest times your trumpet has never given an uncertain sound and your Christian witness has never faltered at the point of race. You have been a true prophet in the area of race," he stressed.

"In more recent years you have been a courageous crusader for peace with justice and the things which make for peace have been clearly positioned in your mind and heart."

Valentine also commended Graham for preaching and practicing a total evangelism which not only deals with the salvation of lost souls but also with the right attitudes and right activities in daily life.

In accepting the award, Graham told the members of the commission he was overwhelmed and humbled.

"I believe the mission of the church to the world is found in two main areas," Graham said. "Those two things are proclamation of the Word and service to the world."

"This has become more clear to me as the years have gone by," Graham added. "As I have traveled around the world and talked to many people, I have come to understand the gospel more than in my early years. I now have a better understanding of what the total gospel means." In this regard, Graham said, "It has been a tremendous comfort to my own heart that God has led me down the right path."

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Graham told members of the commission that he is thankful for those voices which have been raised for peace at this point in history.

"I hope we don't get off on the wrong track and I hope we stay on the right track," Graham stressed. "I hope that God will help lead the human race to accept this before it is too late.

"I am not a pacifist, as I said in Moscow, and I am not for unilateral disarmament, but I am for toning down the rhetoric and I am for doing away with all weapons of mass destruction," he said. "I wish we could start right there."

Graham, whose push for racial equality early in his ministry was not always accepted by some of his fellow Southern Baptists, told members of the commission that he appreciated the fellowship and support he has had from his own denomination.

"There were periods of time when I first started my ministry that I would do some things or get involved in certain things in which I would almost have to apologize for being a Southern Baptist," Graham recalled. "But no longer, because we (Southern Baptists) are now involved all over the world, not only in preaching and teaching, but also in social service and in social justice."

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All The Way To Timbuktu?
Missionaries Move Closer

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INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--Southern Baptists are now set to go all the way to Timbuktu (Tombouctou) for Bold Mission Thrust.

Well, almost. Norman and Beverly Coad will transfer Sept. 1 to become the first Southern Baptist missionaries in the West African nation of Mali, but they will work in the nation's capital, Bamako, rather than the more famous city northeast of it.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board also voted in its April meeting to transfer Leo and Margaret Waldrop from Surinam to Curacao, Netherlands Antilles, June 1. The couple will join with Belen and Enrique Montoya, Venezuela Baptists' first foreign missionaries, to open a Baptist ministry on the tiny island off the Venezuela coast.

The board authorized mission work in Pakistan although no personnel were assigned to the country.

Presently, the Foreign Mission Board has missionaries assigned to 96 countries and geographical entities around the world. Unless there are other changes by Sept. 1, the Coads' transfer will bring that number to 98.

The Coads will be moving from Upper Volta to its sparsely populated neighbor to the northwest. Mali, a traditional crossroads between Arabic North Africa and black West Africa, is half covered by the Sahara desert. Most of the population is Moslem; less than 20 percent is animist and about two percent is Christian. The Coads will work in church planting and development ministries.

Mali is one of nine countries surveyed by former missionary Lavell Seats during a sabbatical from his duties as professor of missions at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo. Seats visited Mali, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Zaire and Gabon to investigate the current situation and the need for additional mission work. The Waldrops and the Montoyas will be working on the largest of six islands in the Netherlands Antilles, a part of the Netherlands. Curacao, Aruba and Bonaire are located off the Venezuela coast and three smaller islands are located across the Caribbean at the north end of the Leeward Islands chain. Dutch is the official language of Curacao, but most of the people speak Papamiento.

Since deciding to send the Montoyas to Curacao, the National Baptist Convention of Venezuela has suffered the effect of a currency devaluation which means they must raise twice as much money as expected to support the couple, said Bryan Brasington, Foreign Mission Board director for Western South America.

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The ministry in Pakistan is expected to center around its second largest city, Lahore, just across the border from India.

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(BP map to be mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press)

Seven Church Buildings
Hit By Louisiana Floods

By Lynn Clayton

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DENHAM SPRINGS, La. (BP)--Although flood waters spread disaster, destruction and distress on Baptists as part of the general population in south and southeast Louisiana, their church buildings were generally spared.

The Louisiana Baptist Convention disaster van was dispatched early Friday, April 8, to Walker, La., and continued its service there until Saturday night, April 9. It was expected to be moved to Slidell on Sunday, April 10.

A late Saturday night check with directors of missions in the areas of the state most affected by the floods indicated seven church buildings had been hit by flood waters. The hardest hit area was Denham Springs.

According to Director of Missions Lawrence Clegg, First Baptist Church of Denham Springs was the only one that was forced to hold its Sunday morning activities away from its church building. The building had six feet of water in it at one time.

Clegg said Don Avenue Baptist Church in Denham Springs had water in its building, but members had cleaned it up and intended to have services in their building Sunday. The church's parsonage also had about one foot of water in it.

Clegg said French Corner Church in Ponchatoula and Cal Church, north of Walker, had water in them, but they both had been able to prepare their buildings for Sunday activities.

He said Port Vincent Mission and French Settlement Baptist Church buildings probably have water in them, "but we can't get in there to find out. None of our church buildings in Slidell seem to be in any danger," Clegg added.

Koy Lee Haywood, director of missions for Baton Rouge, said he was not aware of any local church buildings that have flood waters in them.

Nolan Johnson, director of missions in New Orleans, said Avondale Baptist Church intended to have services Sunday even though pews and carpet had to be removed.

Clegg said Baptists in the area were showing a spirit of cooperation and compassion. "This afternoon about 50 people were at the Don Avenue Baptist Church working to clean up. They were from area Baptist churches. A similar thing was happening at First Baptist there.

"In addition, our people are involved in the rescue, cleanup, and helping get people out of flooded homes," Clegg said.

John Winters, Baptist Men's director of the LBC, said the disaster van was being moved to Slidell "because the worst is yet to come there" and that the van would remain in Slidell as long as it was needed.

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Metro New York Association Proclaims
Bright Future At Festival Of Faith By Daniel J. Nicholas

Baptist Press
4/13/83

NEW YORK (BP)--Almost 3,000 Southern Baptists gathered for a four-hour "Festival of Faith" in New York City, the largest gathering of local Southern Baptists in the Northeast. The evening of celebration and fellowship at Madison Square Garden commemorated the 20th anniversary of the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association.

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Among the 146 churches and mission centers that comprise the Metro Association, worship is held each Sunday in 15 languages. The evening presentation, highlighted by a message by Jimmy R. Allen, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, was translated into Spanish, Chinese and sign language for the deaf.

Allen challenged pastors and lay leaders to "draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. You cannot lead anyone closer to God than you are walking."

Metro Association executive director, Quinn Pugh, called the ministry conducted by New York City churches "exceedingly challenging. Obviously, we have to work at it not from the overwhelming perspective of numbers, but community by community, individual by individual," he said. "We take the 'Big Apple' one bite at a time!"

"The impact of this festival is for our own people to experience the diversity and richness we share among our churches," he said.

Metro Association churches plan to start 61 new churches in the association by 1987. A survey last year determined there are 200 possible sites where residents have no access to a Baptist church. New York City has a population of 18 million, with 146 churches and mission points. That statistic equals "one church for every 125,000 people," Pugh said.

Roy D. Gresham, acting executive director of the Baptist Convention of New York, said "It is an encouragement any time we can bring this diversified a group together for any opportunity. I feel good about the sense of fellowship and togetherness which strengthens our cause out in the fields."

"The future of Southern Baptists lies in the Northeast," Gresham, who retired in 1982 as executive director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland, concluded.

Pugh praised Southern Baptists for contributions to ministries in the Northeast. "We are greatly strengthened every day by the influx of financial and personnel resources," he said.

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(Nicholas is assistant editor for Religious Broadcasting Magazine in Morristown, N.J.)

Compton Tapped to Assume
Foreign Board Media Post

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INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--Alan W. Compton, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board media consultant for Latin America, has been named senior consultant for media development in the board's Office of Overseas Operations, effective June 1.

In the newly created position, he will assist regional media consultants with the design and production of broadcast and audio-visual products. He also will be the liaison on media between missionaries on the field and the board's office of communications and other convention agencies.

Compton will be available to assist the board's office of human resources in recruiting and training media missionaries and in orienting missionaries in the use of media.

Compton, 53, and his wife were appointed as missionaries in 1960. He directed the radio and television ministry of Chilean Baptists and was a pastor in Santiago, Chile, until he was named mass media representative for Latin America and stationed in Mexico City in 1965.

He and his wife, the former Jan Luther, are natives of Raleigh, N.C. and have two grown sons.

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(BP photo to be mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press)