



-- FEATURES

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Missionary Twins Follow
God, Not Each Other

By Erich Bridges

HARDINSBURG, Ky. (BP)--Twin brothers Ron and Don McClung are both preachers. Both lead churches in Breckinridge County, Ky. They attended the same college and seminary. Both married women with the middle name Ann and their first children were born three weeks apart.

Now, both are going to South America as Southern Baptist missionaries--Ron to Colombia, Don to Brazil. Both will be evangelists.

But not to carry the twin business too far, Ron insists: "We're not that much alike." "You can ask our wives or anybody who knows us." Ron is clean-cut and earnest; Don sports a mustache and longer hair and describes himself as easygoing. Ron married one week after finishing college; Don took off for Africa.

The brothers, age 27, agree God has developed them "as individuals, but in the same direction." Born as the seventh and eighth of nine children to John and Edna McClung of Georgia, Ron and Don spent their early years in a two-bedroom house set on blocks with a smokehouse, outhouse and barn out back. Rent was \$35 a month. At one point five brothers shared a single room.

"We were lower middle class," explains Ron. Counters Don: "It was just low. As soon as we moved they tore the house down and built a subdivision."

But lean times didn't interfere with the brothers' spiritual life. Their mother made sure of that. "I can remember walking to church once in 12-degree weather when the car wouldn't start," says Ron. "All of us bundled up and walked a mile and a half. Mom was determined we were going to church. That was her attitude and it was implanted in our lives."

Both twins professed their faith in Christ at age eight and participated in church activities through grammar and high school years. Scholarships helped them attend Mercer University in Atlanta. Don set his heart on being a policeman while Ron aimed for teaching, but each felt drawn to vocational ministry.

Ron began a stint as youth minister at First Baptist Church in Stone Mountain, Ga., worked on a graduate degree in education and married Sharon Ann Wheeler. Don spent two years in Kenya teaching Bible and English as a missionary journeyman, then married Carol Ann Valerius, also a journeyman and the daughter of Erling and Carrie Valerius, missionaries to Brazil.

The brothers joined up again for three years at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., where both decided to become career missionaries. It was a decision to follow God, they stress, not each other.

"Around Lottie Moon time we preachers preach about 'God calling you.' What we need to do is look at ourselves and ask, 'Is he calling me?'" Ron says. "When I leave my church in Kentucky there'll be bunches of people lined up for the job...But if I don't go to Colombia there may not be someone else to go."

Ron will work in Bogota, Colombia's capital city of some six million people. One other Southern Baptist missionary preacher currently works there. Rural Breckinridge County, population 16,342, is home for 17 Southern Baptist pastors, counting the McClung brothers.

Don will work with missionary Boyd O'Neal in a smaller Brazilian city, Maceio, and the surrounding state of Alagoas. O'Neal has been requesting reinforcements for years.

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The McClungs don't mind going to the same part of the world, though Bogota and Maceio are as far apart as Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. "We didn't choose to serve on the same continent," says Don. "It just worked out. I'm glad it did. It would be great to be in the same country, perhaps, but maybe it wouldn't. We don't get along THAT well!"

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(Photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press)

College Administrator Builds
Foundations With Preschoolers

By Gail Rothwell

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SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--During the week, Thomas Terry helps students at Oklahoma Baptist University become leaders. On Sundays he builds foundations for higher education by working with preschoolers in Sunday school.

Terry, executive assistant to the president and vice president for business affairs at OBU, has worked with preschoolers for the past 13 years at University Baptist Church.

"Effective teaching of preschoolers establishes the proper groundwork for good teaching of children and young people," explained Terry, a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Terry, who has been at OBU since 1967, became interested in teaching preschoolers when his daughter was young. "Susan had a male Sunday school teacher and I was amazed at how well he related to the children," he explained.

"One of the exciting things about preschoolers is watching them grow and change," he said. He also is the accompanist for the Young Musicians, fourth, fifth and sixth grade choir. "I look at those kids I taught and it is gratifying to see them grow and mature," he said.

One of the most important things he does is to impress upon young children the idea that church is a positive place to be. "It is important for children to feel good about coming to church. I try to make all the children feel like they are persons who are loved and are a part of the church family."

Terry believes building a sense of accomplishment among small children also develops their self-confidence. In return, he feels the most rewarding thing he gains is being accepted by the children. "What really makes me happy is when I see one of the kids and they are glad to see me," he explained.

"Once I was in the barber shop and a little girl I had taught came in with her brother. When she saw me she exclaimed, 'I know you. You live at the church.'"

As an educator Terry says it is important to constantly update skills. He advocates training conferences at either Ridgecrest (N.C.) or Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Center. He also participates in state and associational clinics for preschool workers.

"Working with preschoolers I have been encouraged to see the diversity of adults who teach," he noted. "It is important for children to establish adult relationships outside the home and through church they meet adults who range in age from 20 to 80."

Terry also has been encouraged by the diversity of occupations of preschool teachers. "At some of the clinics I have attended, the teachers have ranged from college coach to custodian and from housewife to mechanic," he said. He will continue to teach preschoolers because "Sunday school teachers can help children develop habits and skills they will take with them through their life," he said. "And that's important."

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

Colleges, Seminaries Move
To Strengthen Relationships By Lonnie Wilkey and Karen Benson

DALLAS (BP)--Presidents and deans of Southern Baptist colleges and schools have made two major moves to strengthen relationships between colleges and universities supported by the state Baptist conventions and the six seminaries supported by the Southern Baptist Conv ntion.

Action took place during the annual meeting of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools in late June.

Deans and other academic officers voted to appoint a study committee to consider the issue of ministerial education in Southern Baptist institutions of higher education. Several Baptist colleges and universities offer graduate degrees or have endowed schools in theology and religion-academic areas traditionally reserved for the six seminaries.

The issue is of "very vital interest" to the academic officials, according to Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director-treasurer of the SBC Education Commission.

"I think Southern Baptists are headed toward an educational crisis, and this deals with that crisis," Walker said. He told the academic deans the Education Commission is willing to work with the two groups to provide a forum for discussion.

The association also elected Milton Ferguson, president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., as president of the organization. His election to that post is a move that is expected to further strengthen the relationship between colleges and universities and the six seminaries.

There has been no other seminary president named to the top position in the association's 35-year history. Ferguson, vice president of the ASBCS this past year, was elected unanimously by the approximately 160 officials gathered for the meeting.

Other 1983-84 officers are Charles Martin, vice president for academic affairs, Mississippi College in Clinton, Miss., vice president, and James Jordan, president of North Greenville College, Tigerville, S.C., secretary-treasurer.

Walker was reelected executive secretary of the association. During the meeting, he addressed the educators on the importance of student retention programs.

"Campus retention efforts are among the most cost effective investments a college can make," he said. Roughly one-half of all students entering four-year colleges do not graduate from the schools where they first enrolled, he said, and approximately 30 percent of students entering college never receive a degree.

Walker said students most likely to give colleges high attrition rates are women students, minorities, low income students and students in public institutions.

The educators also heard from Gordon M. Caswell, a development consultant from Santa Barbara, Calif. Caswell addressed the presidents and deans on building a better development program. He urged the officials to hire development officers who are trained or educated in fund raising. Proper training includes studies in law, the stock market, real estate, accounting, insurance and trust funds, he said.

Elmer West, director of the ministries and deputation department of the Foreign Mission Board, encouraged the educators to continue their efforts to produce trained, educated and skilled missionaries for Southern Baptist work overseas.

"We need to recognize the profound influence these institutions are having and have had on the education of missionaries," he said. "Certainly, to an extent not witnessed in any other mainline denominations, Southern Baptist colleges have had powerful impact on the training of missionaries. You have developed a broadened effectiveness in the cause of Christian ducation in preparing all students in being better servants in the spirit of Christ, no matter what their vocation may be."

West urged the officials to increase efforts to lead students not only to excellence in academic pursuits, but also to lead them in the "development of character, compassion, ethical sensitivity and healthy inquisitive minds within the context of Christian commitment."

To do this, he said, is the "hallmark of a Christian college."

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Southern Baptists Jailed
In Nuclear Protest

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press
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LIVERMORE, Calif. (BP)--Eleven Dolores Street Baptist Church members, calling themselves the "Southern Baptist Convention," were jailed following a nuclear protest at Livermore Laboratory in Livermore, Calif.

Six men and five women from a peace group of the church, along with more than 1,000 other protesters, were arrested and charged with blocking traffic June 20 when they sat down on a county road leading to the Livermore Research Laboratory, one of the major sites for nuclear weapons research in the United States.

Jim and Rose Ann Lowder, pastor and wife of the Dolores Street congregation, eight church members and a church member from 19th Avenue Baptist Church were among the more than 3,000 protesters at the nuclear research facility June 20. Those arrested had been advised not to give their real names until arraignment. When the 11 Baptists were arrested, each gave their name as "Southern Baptist Convention" to stress their Baptist heritage of biblical justice.

Lowder, writing to his congregation from jail, said he could not "with any integrity" avoid being arrested while others were arrested for their protest. Lowder was still in jail as of June 29, along with the five other men from the church's peace group.

County Judge John Lewis took a hard line against protesters, offering only two-year probationary sentences and \$300-500 fines if demonstrators pleaded no contest to the misdemeanor charge. Last year, protestors at the plant, which included several of the Baptists jailed this year, were released after a short stay in jail. Their charges were reduced to an infraction--jaywalking--and demonstrators were not fined.

After five days in jail, the Baptist women were released. Several of the women had young children; another woman was ill and another faced the loss of a job.

Only one of the women pleaded no contest and accepted the two-year probationary sentence. The others posted bail and pleaded not guilty by reason of necessity, a statement that admits their involvement in the protest and sit-in but which claims they did so out of necessity to protest a greater evil--the proliferation of nuclear weapons. They have a scheduled court date of July 11. Lewis has threatened to sentence those found guilty to 30-45 days in jail.

The men were not willing to accept the no contest plea because the two-year probationary sentence would prohibit their participation in similar protests, which they charge infringes on their right to free speech and to protest, explained Jane Medema, wife of singer Ken Medema and one of the five Dolores Street women jailed in the demonstration.

The purpose of this year's protest seems to have been obscured by press attention to Lewis' handling of the case, said Medema. Last year, she explained, charges were reduced to an infraction--jaywalking. But this year, Lewis has attempted to thwart further protests by the demonstrators by throwing the book at them, she said. She added the judge refused to reduce bail figures (which ranged from \$500 to \$1,000 per individual) and persons were denied release on their own recognizance, despite the fact many were supportive community residents.

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Medema charged the judge was out of order in denying the reduced bail and in prolonging arraignment for the demonstrators, many of whom are living in tent camp jails. This past week, the California Supreme Court issued several writs against Lewis, requiring him to show just cause for the arraignment delays and to allow qualifiable defendants to be released either on their own recognizance or if they could post 10 percent of the bail.

Rose Ann Lowder said she expects her husband to be released before the Fourth of July weekend and he will be back in the pulpit on Sunday, July 3. While in jail over the weekend of June 24-27, Lowder wrote a "letter from jail" to his congregation, detailing his reasons for his arrest.

However one chooses to respond to issues must be done on an individual basis, said Lowder, noting some may disagree with his actions. "I must put words into actions," he wrote. "A sermon must be preached in actions.

"Be assured that I have acted out of conscience, that I have acted out of a sense of urgency that soon the deadly arms race will be out of control and will endanger the existence of our very civilization," he wrote. "I am prepared to face the consequences of my actions."

Lowder also told his congregation, "My act is an act of confession, my own complicity in the escalating death of the world. And it is an act of hope, our children and our children's children may live in peace."

"We are proud of what we've done," said Rose Ann Lowder, who also was arrested last year during a similar protest. "This was an opportunity to teach people about peace. We also realize the consequences can be great for us."

The Lowders, Southern Baptist home missionaries, participated in the protest at the risk of losing Home Mission Board financial support. Paul Adkins, director of the HMB's Christian social ministries department, sponsors of the Lowders, affirmed the couple's right "as Baptists and as Americans" to protest but added they in no way represented the Home Mission Board or the Southern Baptist Convention in the actions.

Medema explained the group used the name "Southern Baptist Convention" when arrested because they wanted to emphasize "we are a product of Southern Baptists."

"We stand on our religious heritage that our religious values have priority," she said. "Among those (priorities) is the search for peace. We are here by virtue of our response to Scripture that justice is demanded here."

Medema added the group participated in the sit-in on the condition that it be non-violent --both physically and verbally. She added the group attempted to follow the scriptures in response to their arrest.

"We were submissive to the government by going through the arraignment process," she said. "We were not submissive to the fact that our taxes were going to something immoral. We'd done what we could (to protest) through the system. Our act was a way of trying to do something and not just talk."

With billions of tax dollars channeled to nuclear weapons research, the group "could no longer be silent," said Medema. "We simply said this has got to stop."

"We wish there were a more clear-cut way to respond to violent weapons," she added. "What we did was a matter of conscience. We had to act in what we believe is God's call to justice and to be responsible for our world."