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Widower Finds Wholeness
Through Church Ministries

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The phone call Jim Walter received the morning of Nov. 1, 1983, came as no surprise. "Your wife has just died," the attending physician informed him.

More than one week earlier while undergoing treatment in her long struggle with mental illness, Rosemary Walter had attempted suicide in her hospital room. After 10 days in a coma, death had come.

"That was the beginning as well as the end of a great deal of my grief," Walter recalled recently as he spoke of his experiences to 70 single adult ministers attending a seminar at the Baptist Sunday School Board sponsored by the family ministry department. Walter is a consultant in adult Sunday school work at the board and has been on church staffs in West Palm Beach, Fla., and Garland, Texas.

After four months of pain, grief, adjustments and new experiences as a single parent to his son, Steve, 11, Walter said, "I now recognize that I'm a whole person.

"I've suffered through the amputation process. I've had a sense of helplessness, but I have found a lot of people were willing to be real. I have just learned the joy of being vulnerable, in admitting I don't have it all together," he reflected.

Walter, 41, said he was willing to speak publicly of his experience to help church leaders identify ways to minister to widowed persons. "I desire to be a steward of my sorrow, but I don't want to exploit the experience. I decided I would do what I do to honor Rosemary's memory."

The days after her suicide attempt when Walter knew death was imminent allowed him a period of time to begin both grief and adjustment. "Anticipatory grief cushions the impact of the loss of a mate," he said. "In that process I found a lot of people helping me in the church."

However, he said he occasionally felt disappointment when people said to him, "Let me know how I can help."

The problem with that, said Walter, was "I didn't know how they could help me. I wish they would have invented ways to help me."

He cited examples of persons who ministered to him by seeing needs and meeting them. One friend offered to wash his car and a neighbor mowed his lawn. The group that ministered to him most effectively, Walter said, was his church training group because "they planned to do it. Sometimes the ministry came in the form of someone who hugged me as I walked down the hall at work.

"There's more to helping people in times of grief than making casseroles," he observed. "We need to extend our ways of helping."

Walter said he also appreciated persons who were honest enough to acknowledge their lack of understanding of his experiences. "Many people at the funeral home were perceptive enough to say they really didn't know how I was feeling," he recalled. "I have also appreciated married persons not pretending they are single in order to minister to me."

As he began the adjustment process to life as a single parent, Walter said persons in the single adult ministry at First Baptist Church of Nashville (where he is a member) have reached out to him and allowed him to share his feelings, questions and experiences.

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"I need to share the joys as well as the sorrows that are happening in my life," he declared. "Being on the receiving end has helped me understand how necessary it is for every church to have a singles ministry."

From his church, Walter said he now needs help "in understanding what it means to be a middle-aged, 41-year-old widower. I need some role models that are not the stereotype of the incompetent male making a mess of housework. I need some help in dealing with my sexuality and re-entering a social life. It's a new world. It's really different."

Walter said he is mastering the daily work routine of maintaining a house. "I know how to wash clothes, I know how to clean house and I know how to take care of myself," but, he laughed, "housework is the pits."

Walter is now focused on the present, being the best father he can to Steve, rebuilding his life and learning from his experiences. But the past remains a real and important part of his life.

During his wife's final illness, Walter recalled, "I stood beside her hospital bed one day and felt so much love for her. I know what it is to love a wife in sickness and in health."

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Emphasis On Partnership
Reflected At WMU Annual Meeting

By Carol Sisson

Baptist Press
3/20/84

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--"Laborers Together" is the theme of the 1984 Woman's Missionary Union's annual meeting to be held June 10-11 in Kansas City, Mo.

The meeting will climax WMU's year-long emphasis on Partnership in Prayer and Ministry. Sessions will explore partnership roles of church, associations, state and national levels.

The meeting, immediately preceding the Southern Baptist Convention, will be a practical expression of WMU's commitment to accomplishing goals of Bold Mission Thrust.

"Perhaps at no other time in history has it been as expedient that we work together to proclaim the Good News as it is today," said June Whitlow, WMU associate executive director.

The WMU sponsored national prayer conference on June 9 will also carry the Laborers Together theme. The conference will focus on praying for the partnerships to be explored at the annual meeting session. The national prayer conference will be held at the Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel and the annual meeting at the municipal auditorium arena.

"Speakers at both meetings were chosen as good role models of partnership" according to Whitlow. Home and foreign missionary speakers will share their unique perspective on the subject of partnership.

SBC President James T. Draper Jr., will address "Partners Through the Church" in Monday's closing session.

Other speakers will include state WMU leaders and SBC agency representatives.

Bobbie Sorrill, author of the new biography, "Annie Armstrong: Dreamer in Action", will sign copies of the book at an annual meeting autograph party.

Three men representing Baptist agencies which were closely tied to Annie Armstrong will speak in annual meeting sessions about those special relationships. The men are Lloyd Elder, Sunday School Board president; R. Keith Parks, Foreign Mission Board president and William G. Tanner, Home Mission Board president.

Musicians will be Susan Baker, Bolivar, Mo., and John Hamilton, pastor of University Baptist Church in Ames, Iowa. Music director will be Donald C. Brown, music department chairman, William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.

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WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION
Annual Meeting
June 9-11, 1984
National Prayer Conference, June 9, 1984
Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel--Municipal Auditorium Arena

THEME: "Laborers Together"

Saturday Morning, June 9, 1984, Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel

"The Local Church in Missions"

10:00--Hymn of Praise, Congregation

--Special Music

--Speaking to the Challenges of Today in the Church--Charlotte Green, WMU director, First Baptist Church, Federal Way, Washington; Nelson Duke, pastor, First Baptist Church, Jefferson City, Mo.

--Partners in Prayer--Barbara Bray, president, Missouri WMU, Knob Noster, Mo.

"The Association in Missions"

11:00--Hymn of Praise, Congregation

--Special Music--John Hamilton, pastor, University Baptist Church, Ames, Iowa

--Speaking to the Challenges of Today in the Association--Joy Pitts, WMU director, Union Baptist Association, Houston; James Lewis, director, associational missions division, Home Mission Board, Atlanta

--Partners in Prayer--Mickey Patrick, president, Illinois WMU, Lindenhurst, Ill.

12:00--Lunch, Radisson Muehlebach Hotel (Advance ticket purchase necessary)

"The State Convention in Missions"

1:00--Hymn of Praise--Congregation

--Special Music

--Speaking to the Challenges of Today in The State Convention--William Pinson, executive director, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas; Nancy Curtis, executive director, Woman's Missionary Union, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Cary, N.C.

--Partners in Prayer--Jeanie Nolan, president, Kansas-Nebraska WMU, Wellington, Kan.

"The Denomination in Missions"

--Hymn of Praise--Congregation

--Special Music

--Speaking to the Challenges of Today in the Denomination--Carolyn Weatherford, executive director, WMU, SBC, Birmingham, Ala.; Robert Bingham, vice president, services section, Home Mission Board; Norman Godfrey, first vice president, Brotherhood Commission, Memphis, Tenn.; William O'Brien, executive vice president, Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.; Morton Rose, vice president, church programs and services, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.; June Whitlow, associate executive director, WMU, SBC

--Partners in Prayer--Pat Lambright, president, New Mexico WMU, Melrose, N.M.

Sunday, June 10, 1984, Municipal Auditorium Arena

12:00--Career Women Luncheon, Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel (Advance ticket purchase necessary)

2:30--"Laborers Together"

--Musical Meditation: Lord, Speak to Me--John Hamilton

--Flag Processional and State Roll Call

--Praise and Adore: Congregational music, Donald C. Brown, chairman, music department, William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.

--We Thank Thee, Lord--Bettye Anne Lovelady, vice president for administration, Mississippi Baptist Seminary, Jackson, Miss.

--President's Guests

--Working Together in the State Convention--James Griffith, executive director, executive committee of the Baptist Convention of the State of Georgia, Atlanta; Dorothy Pryor, executive director, Georgia WMU, Atlanta

--Hymn

--Lord, Speak Through Me--Sheri Richardson, US-2, Home Mission Board, First Baptist Church, Talladega, Ala.; C.W. Brown, church planter apprentice, church extension division, Home Mission Board, Delta, Utah

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--Special Music

--Laborers Together in Bangladesh--Tom and Gloria Thurman, missionaries, FMB, Bangladesh

--Musical Meditation: Lord, Speak to Me--John Hamilton

4:30--Adjournment

6:00--Church WMU directors dinner, Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel (Advance ticket purchase necessary)

Monday, June 11, 1984

7:00--Executive board breakfast for former and present board members, state staffs and WMU, SBC staffs, Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel (Advance ticket purchase necessary)

9:00--"Laborers Together"

--Musical Meditation: Lord, Speak to Me--John Hamilton

--Praise and Adore: Congregational music

--We Thank Thee, Lord--C.W. Brown

--Lord, Speak Through Me--Libby Kirkendall, missionary, FMB, Belgium

--Hymn

--President's Guests

--Executive director's report--Carolyn Weatherford; Lloyd Elder, president, Baptist Sunday School Board; William G. Tanner, president, Home Mission Board

--Hymn

--Business--Election of Officers

--Special Music

--"Laborers Together"--Lucy Wagner, missionary, FMB, Korea

--Musical Meditation: Lord, Speak to Me--John Hamilton

11:30--Adjournment

12:00--Ethnic Luncheon, Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel (Advance ticket purchase necessary)

2:00--"Laborers Together"

--Musical Meditation: Lord, Speak to Me--John Hamilton

--Praise and Adore: Congregational music

--We Thank Thee, Lord--Sheri Richardson

--Lord, Speak Through Me--Kay Hardage, Christian social ministries department, Home Mission Board, Columbia, Mo.; Bettye Anne Lovelady

--President's Guests

--Working Together in the Association--Betty and Walter Agnor, director of missions, Susquehanna Baptist Association, Salisbury, Md.

--Hymn

--Ethnics in Missions--Doris Diaz, language consultant for Hispanic work, WMU, SBC

--Special Music

--"Laborers Together at Home"--Allen Elston, missionary, language missions division, Home Mission Board, Warm Springs, Ore.

--Musical Meditation: Lord, Speak to Me--John Hamilton

3:55--Adjournment

4:00--Reception honoring Bobbie Sorrill, author of "Annie Armstrong: Dreamer in Action"

5:00--Associational WMU officers dinner, Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel (Advance ticket purchase necessary)

7:00--"Laborers Together"

--Musical Meditation: Lord, Speak to Me--John Hamilton

--Praise and Adore: Congregational music

--We Thank Thee, Lord--James Kirkendall, missionary, FMB, Belgium; Kay Hardage

--Lord, Speak Through Me--Indy Whitten, missionary, FMB, Spain

--President's Guests

--Focus on Mission Action--Ken Taylor, Christian social and special missions ministries, Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association, Lee's Summit, Mo.

--Hymn

--Special Music

--Partners Through the Church--James T. Draper Jr., president, SBC, Euless, Texas

--Musical Meditation: Lord, Speak to Me--John Hamilton

8:45--Adjournment

Baptist Students Challenged
To Do Majesty, Mundane Missions

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--"You are the generation that will determine whether God uses a people called Southern Baptists" to spread the Christian message throughout the world.

R. Keith Parks, president of the denomination's Foreign Mission Board, told more than 1,000 college and seminary students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's Student Missions Conference.

Students from 93 campuses in 11 states and Canada attended the 35th annual conference, in Fort Worth, Texas, the first weekend of March.

God has "chosen you to live at a time in human history when more people are ready to respond and are responding to the gospel than at any time since the first human being was created," Parks said.

In the 100-plus countries with Southern Baptist missions efforts, he said 27 new churches are being started each week, and the conversion rate is three times the denomination's pace in the U.S.

"But most of the people in the world today have never had an understandable explanation of the gospel. Is it because God doesn't care? No, it's because you and I and others like us who name Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior have not yet learned to practice daily the dying to self" necessary to reach the ends of the earth, Parks said.

Ioan Moldovan, a Southwestern Seminary student from Romania, addressed the students about the seemingly impossible task of global missions. However, he reminded them God can make the impossible possible.

Moldovan, deported from Romania in 1980 for his Christian beliefs and activities as an evangelist, was interrogated and tortured for days at a time by the Romanian authorities. This, Moldovan said, was an attempt to get him to compromise his faith.

However, Moldovan said, he was able to withstand the persecution, telling authorities, "You can punish my flesh, but you can't hurt my faith."

He challenged the students to do something for Christ in this country, as the Romanians continue to do in theirs, despite the impossible challenge of Communist governmental restriction and persecution.

Yet, William Pinson, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, warned the students, "It is possible to be so dedicated to doing something great for God, that you go back to a campus and do nothing.

"We are waiting to do the majestic," he said, "but we already have the orders to do the mundane."

Pinson listed three things as being routine, but necessary for the carrying out of the task of missions--the everyday activities of prayer, giving and the going and doing of missions.

Effective missions can start nowhere else except in fervent prayer, he said.

"We must give of our substances. If we don't give today, we won't give tomorrow," Pinson said, encouraging the students not to wait until they are out of school to begin to give to missions.

Pinson added it is necessary for someone to leave his home...his familiar surroundings and friends and family. "Jesus left heaven; Paul and the other apostles left their homes at great cost to themselves," he said.

Another conference speaker, Mildred McWhorter, director of the inner-city Baptist Center and Joy Fellowship Center, Houston, talked about her ministry experiences with prostitutes, drug addicts and victims of child abuse in reminding the students, "We sometimes get so excited about what we are doing for people that we forget to love them.

"The first thing we have to do is to accept them the way they are," she said. "You don't win them by condemning them."

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Retired Coach Making
Tracks To Kenya

By Adon Taft

Baptist press
3/20/84

MIAMI (BP)--When the former university football star and high school coach who turned out such world champions as pole vaulter John Pennel and sprinter Gerald Tinker retired three years ago, most people expected his life would change.

But sports, young people, and faith will continue to be a part of Ed Injaychock's life as he and his wife, Betty, head to Kenya.

"I'll be administering the Baptist school and community center in Nairobi (the capital city)," he explained. "The school has the ninth and tenth grades, an adult education curriculum that includes a literacy program, and a recreational program."

Betty, who for 11 years was the city clerk and administrative assistant to the mayor of West Miami, will work either in the kindergarten or the secretarial division of the adult education program.

The decision to go to Africa "wasn't a bolt of lightning," said Injaychock who played football at the University of Miami and coached at Coral Gables High School. "It just sort of happened, But as I look back on my life, I can see that it all was just preparation for what I'm doing now. I didn't know why things were happening at the time, but they prepared us for this particular assignment."

Those events included: coming from Wilkes-Barre, Pa., to the University of Miami where as a small, quick wingback he led the Hurricanes in average gain per run, including a 98-yard touchdown against Chattanooga in 1946; marrying Betty, a Baptist, whose pastor at the time, Rupert Coleman, eventually interested them in the mission field; serving as track coach and an assistant football coach at Coral Gables High and helping found the Miami chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

"I had believed in Christ all my life," said Injaychock, who was raised a Catholic. "But it was when I went to an FCA camp in North Carolina in 1969 that I really committed my life to Christ in a personal relationship."

It was in 1976, after returning from a year as a volunteer on the mission field, that Coleman began talking to the Injaychocks about volunteering for mission service when they retired. "He said they always need teachers and coaches. But I forgot about it," the former coach said.

Then in 1982, Coleman was the guest preacher at the church in Dillard, Ga., where the Injaychocks summer. "He asked us if we were retired yet and if we were thinking about missions. He gave us a phone number to call.

"I tried to forget about it, but decided to call just out of respect for Dr. Coleman. They said they were expecting me to call."

"They" were the personnel people at the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"It was the old story. I asked, 'Why me?' Then, 'Why not me?'"

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Their home congregation, University Baptist Church, endorsed the Injaychocks as missionaries and in May they will go to Kenya, paying their own expenses except for transportation, to serve nine months while the career missionary they will replace returns home on the normal one-in-five years furlough.

The couple also got the approval of their four children. The two boys both were coaches before going into sales. One of the daughters was a teacher before retiring to raise a family as the other one is doing.

Injaychock is looking forward to Kenya "where they have some great track men. It'll feel good to go back and further my knowledge of track."

And he's looking forward to sharing his view that "letting God work in your life just comes about naturally. I guess it's just a matter of making yourself available."

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L.D. Wood, Retired HMB Language
Missions Staffer, Dies

Baptist Press
3/20/84

CLEBURNE, Texas (BP)--Levi Davis Wood, 75, former assistant director of language missions at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, died March 18 in Cleburne, Texas.

Wood, a native of Center, Miss., retired from the HMB in 1974 after eight years in his position with the department of language missions. He was superintendent of missions in the Republic of Panama 1960-65, a period of rapid expansion of Southern Baptist work.

From 1951-60, Wood served as coordinator of language missions for the Baptist General Convention of Texas. He held the position of coordinator of missions for the Lower Rio Grande Valley Baptist Association in Harlingen, Texas, 1948-51.

Wood completed two terms with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Chile where he was administrator and teacher in the Chilean Baptist Theological Seminary.

During World War II, Wood served as an army chaplain and was a lieutenant colonel in the retired Army reserve.

Wood was a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He held student pastorates in Mississippi 1929-33.

Survivors include his wife, Ora, three children and several grandchildren. Funeral services will be held March 20 in Cleburne.

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Inventor Continues
To Weight On God

By Jack Childs

Baptist Press
3/20/84

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Because of a near tragedy, Jerry Brentham rose from a \$7,000 a year high school coach to the founder of a multi-million dollar health equipment manufacturing company in little more than a decade.

The 46-year-old Brentham, president and chairman of the board of Hydra-Gym Athletics, Inc., in Belton, Texas, dedicated his business to the Lord when he designed and constructed his first piece of exercise equipment in 1969. "My wife, Donnie, and I set a goal for ourselves to some day be able to give a quarter of a million dollars a year to the Lord and I am thankful to say that we reached that goal in 1983," Brentham said.

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In addition to supporting his local church, First Baptist in Belton, where he is a deacon, Sunday school teacher and choir member, Brentham is president of Texas Baptist Men and a member of the General Council of the Fellowship of Baptist Men, a part of the Brotherhood Commission. "I particularly enjoy my involvement in lay renewal," he said.

Brentham funds a Christian youth center in Belton that bears his name, has given exercise equipment to children's homes, provides scholarships to Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Temple (Texas) Junior College and financially supports a drug and alcohol abuse center in Belton known as Christian Farms.

The Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tenn., was recently included in Brentham's far-flung generosity. "Realizing the Brotherhood Commission operates on a very tight budget, I doubted they would ever purchase this kind of equipment to help their staff keep physically fit, so I decided to donate a full set of exercise machines to them. I'm a strong believer in maintaining physical as well as spiritual fitness, and I believe the Brotherhood Commission will do a better job for the Lord if I help them with the physical part," Brentham said.

But reaching the position in life where they could realize their goals for contributing to Christian causes did not come easy for the Brenthams. "It all started with that accident in the high school gym in Belton back in 1967 when I was coaching," Brentham said.

"A young man was working out in our training room with 750 lbs. of weights on our lifting device when a clamp broke and the weight dropped on him. Fortunately, a safety device kept him from being crushed, but he was still badly bruised," he explained. "I went home that night and told my wife there had to be a better way to help youngsters tone up their bodies without endangering their lives."

While completing his degree in physical education at Baylor University, he studied kinetics, the changes of motion produced by a force. He coupled this knowledge with a long-standing interest in hydraulic systems to develop a new approach to safely building up the body by exerting pressure against hydraulics instead of moving free weights.

"Two years later (after the accident) at two o'clock in the morning I completed my first workable, hydraulically-operated exercise machine," Brentham said.

"I knew God had given me something important and I dropped to my knees right then, thanked him for giving it to me and committed the machine to him," Brentham said. But there were to be a couple of career changes, including a successful stint in real estate and a serious look at whether the Lord wanted him in full-time music evangelism, before Brentham finally realized God gave him the idea of the exercise equipment "so he could get some things done through me."

Although he built 75 machines himself that first summer and fall of 1969, he decided it would be best to work out an agreement with someone else to manufacture the equipment and pay him royalties. "I granted the rights to my equipment to the largest exercise equipment in the country and was all set to sit back and collect my royalties, but it didn't work out that way."

But the company knew nothing about manufacturing hydraulic systems and they never got the project off the ground. Brentham never collected any royalties and he was left owing \$16,000 which he had borrowed to begin his early manufacturing process.

"Donnie and I sold our house so we could pay our debts and through this experience I ended up in the real estate business. For the first time in our lives we were suddenly enjoying a decent living but I still wasn't happy. I had thoughts about returning to coaching or going into full-time music evangelism because I had done a lot of revival singing, but it finally became clear to Donnie and me that the Lord wanted me to manufacture the exercise machine.

"While in the real estate business, we had built our dream house but decided to sell it to raise capital to start our company. As usual, the Lord had a better way and he used a friend of ours to loan us the money.

"Finally, seven years after the high school accident with the weights and five years after building that first piece of equipment, we renewed our commitment of the exercise machine to the Lord and committed our lives to the Lord along with the machine."

Although suffering several financial reversals along the way, the Hydra-Fitness Industries cranked out \$17,000 in sales the first year. The next year sales jumped to \$67,000. In the third year they were close to a \$500,000 in sales. Twelve months later they were near the million dollar mark. Sales doubled again in each of the next two years and 1983 almost \$5 million worth of hydra-fitness equipment was sold.

"From the beginning we pledged 20 percent of our profits and later five percent of our gross sales to the Lord and we're thankful we have been able to follow through on the commitment," Brentham concluded, "but most of all we're thankful God persisted in revealing to us his plan for our lives because true happiness comes with discovering and following the Lord's will."

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(BP) photo available from Brotherhood Commission of Southern Baptist Convention.

NBC To Air Palm Sunday Service
From First Baptist, Richmond

Baptist Press
3/20/84

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--NBC will broadcast live the Palm Sunday worship service from First Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., April 15.

The broadcast is a joint production of NBC and the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission (RTVC), and one of several carried each year on NBC.

James Flammig, pastor of First Baptist, will preach the Palm Sunday sermon. The sermon, "The Things That Make for Peace" will focus on Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the historical basis for Palm Sunday. Jesus' wish for Jerusalem on that day, is the same wish he has for us, "that we would know the things that make for peace," Fleming said.

The NBC special, "Palm Sunday at Richmond," will broadcast live at 11:00 a.m. EST. Local times and dates may vary.

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Randolph Retirement
Marks End Of Era

By Robert Dilday

Baptist Press
3/20/84

WASHINGTON (BP)--More than 50 Baptists hold seats in the United States Congress. But when Sen. Jennings Randolph retires at the end of 1984, the only Seventh Day Baptist ever to serve in the Senate will be leaving.

The Democrat from West Virginia, who turned 82 in March, has been a fixture on Capitol Hill since 1933. The 50 years since then, which represent the longest period of service of anyone currently in the Congress, have spanned the fervor of New Deal activism, the idealism of the Kennedy administration, the disillusionment of the Vietnam War and the emergence of a new, energetic conservative trend.

Through all these changes Randolph has doggedly stuck to the social outlook he acquired from President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the traditions of his Seventh Day Baptist upbringing.

Seventh Day Baptists emerged during the English Reformation and formed their first churches in the mid-1600s. Today, the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference in the United States claims about 6,000 members and is virtually indistinguishable from other Baptist bodies, with the important exception that its members worship on Saturday.

Randolph takes his religious heritage seriously, worshipping regularly at the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Washington, and readily accepts invitations to speak in churches in settings as diverse as Job's Temple, a tiny, frame West Virginia church that might seat 35, and the Gothic-spired, 5,000-seat Washington National Cathedral.

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"The church is highly important," he says. But, pointing one of the fingers of his mammoth hands at his audience, he continues, "It's what you do after you leave the church doors and walk out into the day by day living process that really matters."

That same commitment has guided his life on the Hill. Shocked by the economic chaos of the early 1930s and the misery it generated among the working class in America, Randolph embraced the policy changes ushered in with the Roosevelt administration in 1933.

Now, when the Democratic Party is struggling to cast off its image of outdated liberalism and flirting with candidates promising "new" ideas, Randolph still takes pride in the accomplishments of the New Deal, and worries it is no longer portrayed as it really was.

"Very few young people are given the chance to know what the situation was then," he says. "If I told young people today we had a Communist Party in the United States, they wouldn't believe it. But along with Franklin Roosevelt...we had the Communist Party of the U.S. right in the ballot booth." Noting the 1,200,000 votes cast for the CPUSA in the 1933 election, Randolph insists, "Those weren't communists who were contributing to that vote. They were (people) looking for something. They had nothing."

Randolph dedicated himself to giving those people something, both in the House--from his first election in 1932 to defeat in the Republican year of 1946--and since 1958 in the Senate. His ability to dole out federal largesse increased when he was named chairman of the Public Works (now Environment and Public Works) Committee, and he is still convinced public works projects create jobs and help the working class.

"You'll still find people today who think the Works Project Administration was a leaf-raking project," he says painfully. "But every single man and woman on WPA worked."

Today Randolph may be better known around Washington for his staunch support of a National Peace Academy, which would be chartered by Congress along the same lines as the military service academies. It is an idea, Randolph is quick to note, first suggested by George Washington, and has been endorsed by the Senator's own Seventh Day Baptist General Conference.

Although Congress has balked at funding a peace academy, Randolph has tirelessly advocated it and grins broadly when he reads letters like a recent one from Father Timothy S. Heal, president of Georgetown University, thanking him for his passion for peace and pledging the University's support in this effort.

Randolph himself jokingly maintains he was destined to lead a peace movement; he was born in Salem, W.Va., and "the meaning of that word is 'place of peace.'"

While Randolph's commitment to peace is unquestioned, his record on issues relating to separation of church and state is less clear-cut. His own background has made him a strong ally of Sabbatarian employees fighting for the right to refuse work on Saturday, and he has opposed tuition tax credits since the early 1960s.

But he has been at odds with some Baptists on government-prescribed prayer in public schools; Randolph has supported most prayer amendments in the Senate and supports the proposal introduced for President Reagan this year.

"There are references to God in the Declaration of Independence," he says. "If you stretch separation too far we wouldn't even have any prayer in the Senate. I don't think the Baptist religion is against that."

Sitting in his office in the Dirksen Senate Office Building, his walls crowded with photographs and memorabilia of a long generation of government service, Randolph seems anything but reluctant to give up his seat and return to the West Virginia mountains. For him it's the beginning of something new, not the end of road.

"Each morning...I stand by an open window," he says, "and say 'Dear Lord, this is not just another day; you have given me a new day.'"

Drama Evangelist
Took Advice Literally

By Jack U. Harwell

ATLANTA (BP)--When an evangelist told Freddie Neel to "get your act together for the Lord," he probably didn't mean the word "act" literally.

But the young woman took it that way and is now thought to be the only full-time drama evangelist in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Neel felt God calling her into some type of Christian vocation even as a child in Edgefield, S.C. "But I couldn't sing and I couldn't be a preacher," she recalls. "Now God has opened doors in drama evangelism. I have seen his hand guiding my life."

During college (Virginia Polytechnic Institute,) she was active on Baptist Student Union revival teams and also taught Sunday school and worked in Vacation Bible schools.

After graduation she spent two years as a US-2 mission worker in New York City and Chicago and felt then God was leading her toward a career in Baptist campus ministry. She enrolled at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., then worked as a minister of education and youth for several years.

All the time, she was using drama and monologues and visual aids and other dramatic devices to teach children and adults. "I found people would respond to a dramatic monologue when they wouldn't respond to a formal lecture," she remembers. "Missions and biblical truths come alive when people actually see the characters such as Lottie Moon, Mary or the wife of Pilate."

Neel then felt led to teach school. "I still felt that I was in the ministry," she explains. "And I was still using drama with meaningful results."

But when she was asked to do several dramatic monologues and workshops, "something was stirring in my soul. God was prodding me gently." She met Felix Snipes of Atlanta, a full-time evangelist who specializes in magic and occult exposes who told her to get her "act together for the Lord, to decide what I could do best and give that best to God. I decided the thing I could do best was Christian drama."

So, in June of 1981, she resigned her school-teaching job and announced she was a full-time drama evangelist. "I had only one engagement at that time," she said. "I spent a lot of time writing original dramatic monologues and preparing drama workshops."

"My most popular monologue was dramatization of the woman of Sychar, the 'woman at the well' who had five husbands and to whom Jesus gave the living water of life. I also had monologues on Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong."

Her calendar filled up quickly, especially for Woman's Missionary Union and Baptist Student Union groups. She now has a full-blown drama ministry.

"A dramatic monologue, in full costume and makeup, can impact people in unique ways," she states. "I have been astounded when some sincere people ask me intensely personal questions, as if they believe I really am the person whom I am portraying."

She said a prostitute was "gloriously saved" at a singles' conference where Neel dramatized the woman at the well.

"Although I feel I do have my act together now, I have not done all God wants me to do with this gift," she added. "I have considered course work in Christian drama, maybe at Southwestern (Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas).

"I see myself as an entertainer with Christian purposes. My first objective is to introduce Jesus Christ as Saviour. Secondly, I hope to encourage my audience to make deeper commitments to Christ, and to make a difference where they live, in his name."

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(Jack Harwell is editor of the Georgia Christian Index.)



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