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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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June 12, 1984

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**O. S. Hawkins Named
Pastors' Conference Head**

By Bob Stanley and Stan Hasteley

KANSAS CITY, June 12--Admonitions to take stronger stands against abortion and pornography mingled with words of personal encouragement at the two-day Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference which closed Monday at Bartle Convention Center.

Crowds estimated at more than 12,000 applauded 11 preachers and inspirational speakers during four sessions of the annual pastors' gathering.

A strongly conservative theme dominated many of the messages, and the pastors elected as their new president, O. S. Hawkins, a Fort Lauderdale, Fla., pastor described by former president Adrian Rogers as "straight as an arrow theologically."

Along with advice on how to be more loving parents, better stewards of their money and more effective proclaimers of the gospel, pastors got tips on how to deal with stress and how to cope with the temptation to quit when the going gets rough.

SBC politics spilled into the conference as a prominent businessman urged punitive action against a pair of denominational agencies.

Zig Ziglar, a motivational speaker from Dallas, criticized the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and the Christian Life Commission for actions of staff members of both agencies.

Ziglar also took swipes at liberalism in seminaries and a recent controversy at Baylor University over posters of nude women in male students' rooms.

He urged the convention to look at the entire operation of the beleaguered Washington, D.C.-based Baptist Joint Committee, under intense fire for the past two years from ultra conservatives within the SBC.

Ziglar attacked BJC executive director James M. Dunn for his former association with a First Amendment rights organization, People for the American Way, also based in the nation's capital.

Ziglar also leveled his artillery on the Christian Life Commission on grounds that a staff member at the Nashville-based agency allegedly said abortion is sometimes "the lesser of evils" in problem pregnancies. Anyone knows the Bible knows abortion is murder, he declared.

Presbyterian filmmaker, Franky Schaeffer of Los Altos, Calif., received standing applause after urging Southern Baptists to lead out in the fight against abortion and to "defend your theology."

Bailey Smith, pastor of Del City (Okla.) First Baptist Church and a former president of both the Pastors' Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention, said that never in his lifetime had he seen the devil attacking pastors as he is doing today.

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Many are discouraged and considering quitting their ministry, he noted, and some have fallen victim to the devil's temptations. The role of the pastor is too glorious to lose for a moment of sensual pleasure, Smith said.

Another speaker, Stephen F. Olford, of Encounter Ministries, Wheaton, Ill., shared an open prayer that God would "make us servant preachers."

Ed Young, pastor of Houston's Second Baptist Church challenged the pastors to ask themselves how they are doing as persons, as partners (in their marriage) and as parents.

Other advice also was prevalent. Roy Fish of Fort Worth called on pastors to set the example in personal evangelism and to make evangelism their first priority. Fish, a Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary professor of evangelism, warned that "you can't look through the eyes of Jesus and look at evangelism with disdain."

Ron Lewis, of Church Growth Design, Nashville, Tenn., said recent surveys show nearly 90 percent of Southern Baptist laypeople fail to list "winning the world to Jesus Christ" as the church's first priority.

But the preachers were also cautioned that pastors are mostly "Type A" personalities especially prone to stress.

Charles Lowery, minister of counseling at Dallas' First Baptist Church, said: "A Type A person does sometimes stop and smell the roses, but if they smell good he'll try to sell them on Mother's Day to raise money for the building program."

Crowds varied in size from 8,000 on Monday morning to what Secretary-Treasurer Fred Powell of Excelsior Springs, Mo., estimated as "12,000 to 13,000" at the concluding session Monday evening.

He estimated 10,000 were on hand Monday afternoon at the same time a nearby meeting of the "SBC Forum" attracted 2,000.

In addition to Hawkins, the pastors elected Robert Tenery, pastor of Burkemont Baptist Church, Morgantown, N.C., as vice-president, and had to divide the secretary-treasurer job because it couldn't get a conclusive vote between the two nominees.

Calvin Miller, pastor of Westside Baptist Church, Omaha, Neb., was named secretary, and Tom Melzoni, Sr., pastor of Miami Shores Baptist Church, Dayton, Ohio, was designated Treasurer.

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Women Challenged
To 'Mission Ventures'

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Baptist Press
6/12/84

By Jerilynn Armstrong and Orville Scott

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--More than 2,500 women were challenged at the three-day annual meeting of Woman's Misisonary Union to continue as the "missions conscience of Southern Baptists" and to attempt missions ventures never tried before.

Foreign and home missionaries and leaders of Southern Baptist Convention mission boards issued stirring challenges backed by flags of the 103 nations where Southern Baptists have missionaries.

WMU leads the almost 37,000 Southern Baptist churches in supporting missions through prayer, mission study and special offerings.

The women unanimously elected Dorothy E. Sample of Flint, Mich., to a fourth consecutive term as their president and Betty Gilreath of Charlott, N. C., to similar term as recording secretary.

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Mrs. Sample sized up the Convention theme, "Laborers Together," when she said, "We must do things we've nev r done before, think thoughts we've never thought before, even fail in ventures we've never attempted before."

"For together we have the potential to transform hopelessness into hope, problems into pr mise, despair into discovery and liberty into true freedom found only in Jesus Christ."

Southern Baptist missions leaders called WMU "the missions conscience of Southern Baptists and challenged them to help reverse an "erosion" in missions support.

R. Keith Parks, president of the Richmond-based Foreign Mission Board, express d concern that the Lottie Moon Offering for foreign missions provides more foreign missions supp rt than the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' main method of undergirding missions work.

"Throughout the Convention an erosion has taken place in Cooperative Program giving," Parks said. "Except for what you're doing, we'd have to reduce by more than 40 percent what is happening in world missions."

Southern Baptists have about 3,400 foreign missionaries and about 3,792 home missionaries supported through the Cooperative Program and special offerings.

Parks said Southern Baptists have given a total of \$654 million for foreign missions through the Lottie Moon Offering. The 1983-84 foreign missions offering of \$58 million was \$4 million greater than the previous year but short of the goal by about \$2 million.

William G. Tanner, president of the Atlanta-based Home Mission Board, told the women that the annual Annie Armstrong Offering for Home Missions is "making the difference in the United States.

"But just the offering is not enough. We must have a distinct week of prayer and home missions study."

Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of WMU, reminded the women that the WMU executive committee voted three days earlier to reduce the Lottie Moon offering goal from \$72 to \$70 million in 1985 and to set a \$75 million goal for the 1986 offering.

The goal for the 1985 Annie Armstrong offering has been reduced from \$32 million to \$30 million.

Prayer was the overriding emphasis of missionaries during the three-day convention. More than 300 women opened the meeting with a prayer conference.

"It is imperative that the responsibilities of missions be shared by more women and the church as a whole."

Bettye Anne Lovelady, missionary associate of the Home Mission Board's Black Church Relations Department, Jackson, Miss., urged the women to "spend more time praying about each other, for each other and with each other.

James Griffith, executive director for the executive committee of Georgia Baptists, and Dorothy Pryor, executive director of the Georgia WMU, both of Atlanta, emphasized the role of the women in prayer and financial support of partnership missions.

Griffith said that if WMU continues its commitment and dedicated service, Bold Mission Thrust (Southern Baptists' goal to reach every person on earth with the gospel by the year 2000) may just b come a r ality."

James F. Kirkendall, pastor of Int rnational Baptist Church, Brussels, Belgium, urged Baptists to pray for their missionari s, not just on their birthdays but acc rding to what is happening in the countries where they serve.

He recalled that when the report was circulating in 1970 that he was missing in Beirut, Lebanon, many churches prayed for him at their Wednesday night prayer meetings. He reminded that his release came during the time frame of the prayer meetings.

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'Forum' Premieres
Before 2000 Persons

By Anita Bowden and Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press
6/12/84

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--About 2,000 persons attended the premier meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Forum Monday afternoon which Duke K. McCall, president of the Baptist World Alliance, described as "the biggest baby ever born at a Southern Baptist Convention setting."

McCall, one of five keynote speakers at the SBC Forum, said the meeting met his own personal needs for growth and inspiration.

The SBC Forum was one of seven conferences held prior to the 127th annual meeting of the SBC.

Meeting in direct conflict with an afternoon session of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference which attracted 10,000, organizers still labeled the Forum a success and said they will consider plans for another meeting in 1985.

Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Asheville, N.C., and one of the organizers for the conference, said that for years he had felt out of place attending other pre-SBC meetings and believed he was not alone in his feelings.

"You can come to the Southern Baptist Convention and the pre-meetings and never hear from this side of the house," he explained, noting that the Forum consisted primarily of those from a more moderate theological stance.

"But there is some magnificent thinking going on inside the minds of some Southern Baptist pastors. They needed a place to speak and now there's the platform," Sherman said, acknowledging the Forum served as an alternative to the SBC Pastors' Conference, one of the largest pre-SBC meetings.

Gene Garrison, pastor of First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, who presided over the meeting, told participants their positive response would be represented to planners as a statement of "do it again."

Speakers addressed a variety of issues facing Southern Baptists, including the role of women in ministry and efforts to make SBC colleges and seminaries take a more conservative line.

Sara Ann Hobbs, director of the missions division for the North Carolina Baptist Convention, Raleigh, told attendees women are going to continue to respond to God's call and are going to serve somewhere, even if it is not within the SBC.

She drew from statistics to show that although more and more women are attending seminaries, jobs available to female graduates are decreasing. Women held many newly created church staff jobs in their embryonic stages, noted Hobbs. But when men began taking those jobs and the title changed from director to minister, women no longer were seen as appropriate for the position.

That attitude will change again, as laywomen become corporate executives and bank presidents and refuse to be barred from decision-making positions in the church, Hobbs predicted.

Ministers today can continue to encourage women to answer God's call, recommend and hire them, she added.

Speaking on the theme that God defines love, McCall acknowledged that love is not always easy to practice.

It's easier to be aware of all the things people dislike, such as critics who have "nothing to offer in place of what you're doing," he said. But those who don't love, don't love God, he added.

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if the people of Kansas City could say the people who've been here (at the SBC) are a loving people?"

David Matthews, pastor of First Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., called for more vision on the part of pastors and warned that lack of God-inspired vision leads to dead preaching.

Baptists have always been strong Bible people, he said. But too often they have had a weak doctrine of the Holy Spirit. If the two don't go together, "you will end up a sect or a cult," he warned.

"The Bible is not synonymous with God, and therefore should not be elevated to the sovereignty that belongs only to him," Matthews contended. "If the Bible were God, or even the totality of God's self-revelation, we would not need preaching. We would only need Bible reading."

Pastors should spend more time encouraging their congregations than lambasting them with accusations about a lack of Christian commitment, asserted Kenneth Chafin, former pastor of South Main Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, and the new Carl Bates Professor of Christian Preaching for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Chafin spent much of his time encouraging pastors to see themselves as gifted ministers chosen of God for an important task.

"There is not anyone in this room whom God has not gifted and who cannot become effective successful human beings for the kingdom if you accept those gifts and develop those gifts and dedicate those gifts to God."

Chafin challenged the audience to return to their churches and offer an encouraging word to their congregations rather than giving reports about "who said what at the Southern Baptist Convention."

Unless Southern Baptists allow room for new ideas and questions in the classrooms of their colleges and seminaries, the denomination will fail to offer a relevant biblical message to today's society, charged Kirby Godsey, president of Mercer University, Macon, Ga.

Godsey asserted efforts to force SBC schools to present more conservative theological ideas will leave "our children slaves to their ignorance and victims of narrowminded bigotry. No denomination is going to remain alive that doesn't remain self-critical and open to new ideas and new thoughts and even a fresh voice from God."

He challenged Baptists not to divorce intellect from faith and stated, "Let us not offer God empty-headedness and call that laying our lives on the altar."