



-- FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
Wilmer C. Fields, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Craig Bird, Feature Editor

October 24, 1984

84-153

Col. Bizzell, 91, Makes
Missions His Priority

By Bill Webb

GLOUCESTER, Va. (BP)--Lee Caraway Bizzell was 61 before he finally got his priorities straight. That was back in 1954 when he accepted Christ.

"Then the good Lord took first place in my life and he's had it ever since," the 91-year-old retired army colonel acknowledged.

The U.S. Army was No. 1 in his life until then. He recalls his words to his first wife, the late Clara Mae McCarron, just before he married her in 1922: "Look here, honey. You are second choice. I first married the Army and if an emergency occurs, I'll leave so fast it'll make your head swim.

"Fortunately she was a naval officer's daughter," he smiled. "She understood."

For nearly 30 years, the "Colonel," as his friends call him, has been a member of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Gloucester, Va. Now the oldest member, he has taught the older men's Sunday school class for 26 years. He is also faithful in his giving. "My tithes go to my church but my offerings go to things I think they are needed for," he said.

That helps explain why he has given his estate to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Twice widowed, he is in the process of moving from the large 167-year-old Gloucester County home where he has lived for 30 years. He is giving it, most of the furnishings and a collection of antique porcelain to the Foreign Mission Board to establish a trust fund.

Bizzell, who receives a military pension, will receive a tax break for the gift and will benefit from the proceeds of the trust for as long as he lives.

Why did he choose to give his estate to further the cause of foreign missions?

He has seen the needs of the world. He and his second wife, the late Kathryn Evangeline Jarvis, made a world tour in 1970. He lived in 14 overseas countries during his 37 years in the Army and hunted big game in the Philippines, Cambodia and Germany.

He saw people in Cambodia who "didn't know anything about Jesus Christ." And he noticed the outcasts of India living in misery. "There are millions of children in Africa and other places dying every year," he added.

"To me, the greatest thing is helping those people who haven't any chance," he said.

Though the Colonel didn't accept Christ until he was 61, he says he wanted to become a Christian back when he was a 10-year-old in Tate County, Miss. But he had lied to his mother about swimming in a nearby creek and had stolen a watermelon from a neighbor's patch. As a result, "I didn't think I could be a Christian," he said.

As a teen-ager, he decided if he couldn't be a Christian he would at least be fair to every human being. That principle guided him for 45 years.

He began seeking God, he said, when his only son died in 1953 at the age of 29. "He wasn't a Christian and neither was I," he said soberly. "I realized I had made the greatest mistake of my life because I knew I had neglected what I think is a father's duty, his responsibility to lead (his son), guide him and direct him in the right way.

"He never heard me read the Bible. He never heard me pray. He heard me use a lot of profanity. I drank a little--there were very few things that I didn't do. But I changed."

--more--

Since that time he has given his testimony in crusades in seven states (South Dakota, Wyoming, Florida, West Virginia, New York, New Jersey and Virginia). He tells his listeners the most important thing they can leave behind is their example. He has done the same in prisons and penitentiaries.

"Now my main interest in life is to advance the cause of Christ," he maintains. On most Thursday evenings he's out with other members of his church on weekly visitation. "If you're old enough to be a Christian, you're old enough to tell others," he says. "As far as I'm concerned, there's no alibi."

The good-natured Mississippi native starts each day by bending over and touching his toes 50 times, running in place 600-800 strides and jogging down his long driveway to get his newspaper. "I run upstairs and down again and it doesn't even make me breathe hard," he says matter-of-factly.

A veteran of both world wars, the Colonel can recall experiences from his military days and his big game hunting expeditions in the 1930s as if they happened yesterday.

His 23 hunting trophies, appraised at \$217,000, which hung in the antique porcelain shop he operated next to his house, have been donated to the North Carolina State Museum of Natural History in Raleigh.

--30--

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

R. Inman 'Prof' Johnson
Receives 1984 Mullins Award

Baptist Press
10/24/84

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--R. Inman Johnson, who taught thousands of ministers in music and speech during a 45-year career at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., has received the 1984 E.Y. Mullins Denominational Service Award.

The Mullins Award, presented 21 times since 1963, is the highest honor Southern seminary can bestow on an individual, honoring outstanding contributions to Baptist life.

Johnson, 89, is the oldest living retired member of the Southern seminary faculty. His affiliation with the seminary stretches back into the nineteenth century, when he lived in student housing as the son of a seminary student.

He joined Southern's faculty in 1919, during the presidency of Mullins, the seminary's fourth president, to teach the seminary's first classes offered in elocution and church music. He is best known by the thousands of students who for many years studied in his speech class. They affectionately called him "Prof," a name that still brings recognition nearly 20 years after Johnson's retirement from the faculty in 1965.

Johnson also was alumni secretary at the seminary for years, and has spent 15 years as an interim pastor. His total ministry spans 69 years.

Past recipients of the Mullins award include Sydnor Stealy, Herschel Hobbs, C. Oscar Johnson, Gaines S. Dobbins, Duke K. McCall, Louie D. Newton, Clifton J. Allen, James L. Sullivan, Albert McClellan, Porter Routh, Owen Cooper and Grady Cothen.

--30--

Laxalt Sues Newspapers
Over Critical Stories

By David Wilkinson

Baptist Press
10/24/84

WASHINGTON (BP)--Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev., sponsor of gambling legislation opposed by Southern Baptist leaders, has filed a \$250 million libel lawsuit against a California-based newspaper chain which carried stories about alleged skimming at a Nevada casino formerly owned by Laxalt and his family.

--more--

Laxalt, chairman of President Ronald Reagan's re-election campaign, has received widespread attention in Christian circles in recent months for a letter sent to ministers in behalf of Reagan's re-election and for his sponsorship of legislation that would allow interstate advertising of casinos and lotteries.

The pro-Reagan letter, sent in July to 45,000 ministers in 16 states, prompted criticism for mixing religion and politics. Praising Reagan's "unwavering commitment to the traditional values which I know you share," Laxalt urged the ministers to conduct voter registration drives in their churches.

The bill to remove federal restrictions on interstate advertising of casinos and state sponsored lotteries has been strongly opposed by gambling expert Larry Braidfoot of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission and other religious leaders. The bill was reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee but was not acted upon by the full Senate. A House companion bill died in subcommittee.

The articles cited in Laxalt's lawsuit alleged up to \$2 million was skimmed in 1972-73 at the Ormsby House hotel-casino, while the Laxalt family still owned the resort, with the money going to members of the Milwaukee mafia.

Laxalt filed the lawsuit Sept. 21 after McClatchy Newspapers refused demands for a public retraction and then for a private letter of retraction. The stories appeared in three McClatchy newspapers, including the Sacramento Bee, in November 1983.

McClatchy Executive Editor Frank McCollough said the retraction demands were rejected because "it was our conviction that the story was completely accurate."

An investigation by Nevada gambling regulators concluded there was no skimming during Laxalt's tenure as co-owner of the casino.

In a statement released by his Washington office, Laxalt said the libel suit was filed because the newspapers "went far beyond questioning my political judgement, which is fair comment."

"I simply am not going to allow my name or that of my family to be besmirched by some in the media who utilize innuendos and conscious falsehoods as the basis for their attacks."

Frank Fahrenkopf, chairman of the Republican National Committee and a Laxalt protege, also denounced the news stories, claiming they were prompted by Democratic advertising and the bias of the "liberal media."

Fahrenkopf, a Nevada attorney, was president of the National Association of Gaming Attorneys in 1983. "Gaming," rather than "gambling" is the word preferred by casino and lottery owners.

Just before Laxalt filed suit, CBS and ABC television executives postponed airing news reports about Laxalt's associations with people allegedly linked to organized crime.

Mike Wallace of CBS' "60 Minutes" told a Los Angeles Times reporter, "I'm sure one of the reasons Laxalt filed the suit was so he doesn't have to talk to people like us."

The McClatchy news stories are not the first time questions have been raised about Laxalt's ties with persons allegedly connected with organized crime's involvement in Nevada gambling circles.

Another 1983 article in the Wall Street Journal charged that Laxalt received campaign contributions from casino executive Moe Dalitz and other persons who have been linked to organized crime figures. At the time, Laxalt was a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee which deals with legislation on criminal law.

A 1982 article in The Nation described Laxalt's business ties to casino magnat Howard Hughes and to Delbert Coleman, a casino owner whose license eventually was revoked for stock fraud.

Leadership Models In Church Described

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Rather than adopting the leadership models popular in the corporate world, Christian leaders should seek to be "amateurs" in the truest sense, according to Ernest White.

White, the Gaines S. Dobbins Professor of Church Administration and Leadership at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, made his remarks during his faculty address at the seminary.

Pointing out the word "amateur" comes from the Latin word "amore" (love), White explained an amateur is one "who does something for the love of it."

"Christian leadership is loving leadership," he asserted.

The professor contrasted that with corporate leadership models which have been adopted in Southern Baptist churches and denominational agencies in recent years.

The "organization man/bureaucratic" model is characterized by a multiplication of positions, White said. He added this leadership style inspired the "Peter Principle"—that "in a hierarchy, every employee tends to rise to the level of his own incompetence."

Many Southern Baptist churches adopted this model in the 1950's and 1960's, stressing more and more specialized positions and stressing the organization itself rather than the ultimate goal, White indicated. In this they were "following the lead of denominational agencies."

A second style, the "CEO (Chief Executive Officer)/Gamesman" model, has as its purpose "to become a winner," White argued. Moving from an emphasis on administration to one of leadership, the CEO-type leader represents a "corporate ethos" which has appeared in Southern Baptist churches in recent years.

"Pastors, especially in the mega-church culture, are often seen as the CEO's of the church," White declared. "In the 'Wall Street Baptist Church' you have all the feeling of a corporation, including the quarterly demand for more buildings, baptisms and budget funds."

The most recent model to make its way into the church is the "Media Marketing Merchant," according to the church administration expert.

Using the science of marketing and the tools of media, leaders of this type "make the priority of the organization and management image," White explained. He believes many religious leaders have outperformed the corporate world in this area, "whether selling 900-foot images of Christ or...worthless shares of religious land development."

With an increasing demand of such leaders in the church, White says, "The demand for Media Marketing Merchants as pastors far exceeds the supply. Michael Jackson-type concerts cannot be distinguished from Christian worship by many churches."

For such leaders, "The image of the appeal, not the content, is the primary consideration," White declares.

Though such models may seem attractive, White believes authentic Christian leadership must seek a more Christ-like model.

White believes that in the wilderness temptations, Jesus was offered "a royal road to leadership," but that he refused to accumulate power for its own sake or to attract attention with a "media event" such as jumping from the Temple pinnacle.

Christian leadership is concerned with creativity, redemption and wholeness, White indicates, with a "commitment to the living Christ" as its foundation.

"Star Wars leadership" may seem to offer "big box office" results to churches, says White, but "only high-touch leadership will reach out to alienated masses and minorities."

Dunn Named President
Of Bread For The World

WASHINGTON (BP)—Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs Executive Director James M. Dunn has been elected president of Bread for the World—a Christian citizens' movement focusing solely on hunger.

Dunn and 41 other religious leaders volunteer their time and services as officers and directors of Bread for the World. Dunn, who has been a director of Bread for the World for the past six years, is the first Southern Baptist to head the 10-year-old organization.

"Baptist Christians share the heavy burden of concern and compassion for the thousands of people who are starving to death in the current hunger crisis in Africa and the ongoing threat of starvation to millions of people in the world, most of them children," Dunn said. "I take very seriously the opportunity of service represented in this new role and plead humbly for the prayers of all Christians who are committed to helping feed starving people."

Another Southern Baptist, Patsy Ayres of Sewanee, Tenn., was elected vice-president. Ayres, currently a member of the SBC Christian Life Commission, previously was secretary of Bread for the World.

Other Baptists currently directors of the Washington, D.C.-based organization include Andy Loving of Atlanta, and William A. Lawson, pastor of Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, Houston.

Bread for the World works cooperatively with various denominational hunger efforts, including those of SBC agencies. It is not directly involved in food distribution, but in advocacy of national public policies that "give hungry people a chance."

This year, Bread for the World was highly instrumental in securing inclusion of a \$25 million Child Survival Fund in a 1985 foreign aid package passed by Congress. The organization estimates that program will save 250,000 lives.

--30--

Brisson Named Registrar
At Southeastern Seminary

Baptist Press
10/24/84

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Carson Brisson, 30, has been named registrar/director of admissions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., by the school's board of trustees.

The Lumberton, N.C., native will assume the post March 8, succeeding Fred Sandusky, who will retire on that day after 30 years with the seminary.

Brisson, a graduate of Mars Hill College, received the M.Div. and the Th.M degrees from Southeastern in 1979 and 1980 and is completing work toward the Ph.D. at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. At Southeastern, he was a Fellow in church history, and at Southern is a Garrett Fellow in Christian theology.

During seminary and college studies, Brisson was on the staff at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center. He also was youth minister at First Baptist Church, Dublin, N.C., and pastor of Pisgah Baptist Church, Cloverport, Ky. From 1979 to 1982, he and his wife, the former Lou Ann Davis of Greensboro, N.C., were Baptist representatives to Israel, under appointment of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

--30--