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October 30, 1985

85-134

Moore Tells Students  
 Not To Give Up On SBC

By Larry E. High

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--"Don't you give up on the Southern Baptist Convention. We have our problems but they are not new to us and we're going to be all right," the first vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention told students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., during a chapel address.

Winfred Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, told students: "There will be Southern Baptist churches here until the Lord comes back and there will a Southern Baptist Convention. There will be mission boards and there will be institutions supported in prayer and with offerings all along the way.

"So you stay in there and believe in those who work along side you because we're going to be there together. I don't know what is going on. But I do know what the outcome is going to be because I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," Moore said in reference to the seven-year controversy within the SBC.

"I believe in his promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church and I believe in the people I know as Southern Baptists," he said.

Moore, who was in North Carolina to speak at the seminary and at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, began his seminary address by telling students: "I am a conservative Baptist. I want you to know that I believe the Bible and there is no way anyone can believe more of the Bible or believe the Bible more than I do."

The Tennessee native then delivered a message from Luke 9:57-62. He told the seminarians, "In my judgment, the most prevalent sin among Southern Baptists today is the sin of disobedience--sinful disobedience to the things we do understand about the Word of God.

"I do not really have any problems with those passages of Scripture I do not understand. The problems I have are with those I do understand and do nothing about," Moore said.

"I don't know how the ax head floated. The Bible said it did and I believe that. I have no worry about that at all. What I worry about is that Jesus said to me, 'If they compel you to go a mile, go two.' When I don't do that I have a guilty conscience," Moore said.

"There is no substitute that God will accept from you and from me for our lack of obedience. The Lord needs committed people in the critical hour we find ourselves," he said.

Moore concluded by telling the students, "You are living in the greatest time of opportunity God has ever given to any generation of his called people."

Later, speaking to 200 dinner guests at Wake Forest University, Moore said, "I fully believe we are going to have a Convention and it's going to be a stronger and better Convention in the days to come than in the past.

"Some of us who are leaders in this Convention and in our churches, both pastors and laypeople, are going to have to learn we really do need each other. When we understand that we'll begin to work together as Christian people should to get on with Bold Mission Thrust and to get on with taking care of Kingdom business," he said.

"The place in Scripture where I have most difficulty with the inspiration of the Scripture is not in the study of it or the reading of it, it is when I begin to put it into practice. The Living Word, through me, doesn't always come out the way I meant for it to come out," he said.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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Moore said he would like his motto for life as a Christian to be a passage from the Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus said, "If they compel you go a mile, go with them two."

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Forum Discussion Panel  
Addresses Issues In SBC

By Larry E. High

Baptist Press  
10/30/85

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP)—Two North Carolina Baptists joined a Texan and a Virginian in a forum at Wake Forest University to discuss the issues facing Southern Baptists.

Ned Matthews, vice-president of the SBC Pastors' Conference and pastor of Parkwood Baptist Church in Gastonia, N.C., and Randall Lolley, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., participated in a two-hour panel discussion along with Christine Gregory of Danville, Va., former president of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, and Winfred Moore, first vice-president of the SBC and pastor of First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas.

Lolley told the audience Southern Baptists are pro-education and at the same time anti-intellectual, and added if the current controversy prevails, in education the result will be "indoctrination."

He said an important question being raised today is "How much diversity can we stand as Southern Baptists?" He said he does not know the answer but suggested, "There is a Southern Baptist way of being conservative and diverse and we're simply going to have to learn to come to grips with that."

Lolley said Southern Baptists can "deal with parameters but we're not so good at dealing with particulars." He noted Southern Baptists are capable of being diverse within such parameters as the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement.

"But if within that parameter we get into interpretative particulars, we're going to self destruct. As surely as you're sitting here and I'm standing here we will have to find another way to express our diversity," he said.

Lolley also said, "The nearer we move to a denominational principle of conforming rather than merely cooperating we, to that degree, have tested new ground and do not have any models for managing it."

Lolley said Southern Baptists need scholars and people who will spend their lives studying the Hebrew and Greek languages. He cautioned that Southern Baptists are "perilously near a time when the people would take the Scriptures away from the scholars."

The seminary president said he believes the Bible is "perfect." He explained that means to him, "The Bible does exactly what God intended for the Bible to do."

Matthews, a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board, said any assessment of "the ferment in the Convention" must include a study of history over the past two decades. "In the early 60s three incidents stand out as precipitators of the backlash that produced the resurgent conservatism that is now in power in the Convention," he said.

He listed the incidents as the controversy surrounding Ralph Elliott, a Midwestern seminary professor who wrote a book on Genesis; Volume One of the Broadman Bible Commentary, and the publication in the Baptist Program of an article by then Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor William Hull entitled, "Shall We Call the Bible Infallible?"

Elliott's book raised a storm of protests over his comments about the first 11 chapters of Genesis. Matthews said the controversy "proved to many that some Southern Baptist scholars had abandoned the historicity of the first 11 chapters of Genesis. Even though he (Elliott) was eventually dismissed, the issue was not, and in my opinion is not, resolved."

In 1969 the Baptist Sunday School Board released Volume One of the Broadman Bible Commentary, a 12-volume set of commentaries on the Bible. The Genesis section soon became the focus of controversy. "The publication of the Broadman Commentary subsequently revealed a denominational bureaucracy which was highly resistant to doing the will of the Convention which owned it," Matthews said.

Messengers to the 1970 Southern Baptist Convention instructed the Sunday School Board to "withdraw Volume One from further distribution and that it be rewritten with due consideration of the conservative viewpoint," Matthews said. "The Sunday School Board did obey the first part of the requirement but ignored the second," Matthews said. "The result," he said, "was the publication of a new volume...as liberal in perspective as the first."

"The question that arose in the minds of many of us then was, 'Is anybody really listening to us?' Another question was and is, 'Do we have a Convention moving in one direction while our agencies are moving in an opposite direction?'"

He said the third incident of the 60s was rejection of appeals to publish a subsequent article to Hull's by "conservative scholars on the Bible written from the perspective of inerrancy. Many came to see the liberal wing would not be fair. Their bias toward theological liberalism was, and is, obvious.

"In my opinion there is nothing evil about being political in and of itself. The process of politics is required by our polity, both on the local and, I think certainly, on the national level," he said.

"What really upsets 'liberals,' in our opinion, is that we have gained the power and they have lost it, at least for the last six years. But it is a mistake to assume that conservatives are only interested in gaining power. Nothing could be further from the truth.

"We have one goal and that is to return this Convention to its conservative theological roots," he said. "We are interested in peace and do not delight in conflict. Yet, we will not purchase that peace at the price of theological compromise."

"Conservatives are not willing to go back to the years that preceded the election of Adrian Rogers (1979). We feel that we must elect conservative presidents. We're out to do that and we will be well represented in the Atlanta convention," Matthews said.

Gregory's remarks concerned women. "When I look at the biographies of the Annie Armstrongs, the Lottie Moons, and the Fannie E. S. Hecks, for inspiration, it is then that I get caught up. I must be those people for my generation. I must therefore suggest that our priorities for the source of motivation be the balance between the Scripture and our personal experience with Jesus Christ," she said.

Gregory added: "I believe that the New Testament profoundly speaks to the calling out of the gifts in God's children. I am willing to affirm your call and in return I ask you to allow me my commitment and let me enjoy any of the peculiarities of the feminism I might want and you do not. Neither one of us should be threatened by the other."

Moore said the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans warning them not to destroy the work of God's kingdom for any reason. "Paul is saying to us by inspiration of God, 'Don't for the sake of anything—it does not matter how important you think it is—don't for the sake of anything, destroy the work of God's kingdom.'

"You can call it give and take or whatever you please. I prefer to call it Christian acceptance of one another," he said. "Before God, I intend with all that is within me to give whatever I have to give to seeing us come together in a harmony that will enable all of us to get on with the mandate Christ has placed upon us," Moore concluded.

In response to a question, Moore said he does not "delight" in denominational politics. "I do not think it is good for the kingdom of God, I don't care who does it. The only way I see for us to get out of it is by prayer and by doing the very thing we are doing tonight--sitting down with one another to see."

Matthews said, "I think there is no way to avoid politics within the structure of Southern Baptists. I do think the spirit in which we conduct these politics in the denomination is more important."

Lolley said, "I honestly, if I know my heart, am delighted to put a dollar in an offering plate to support the attitude and interpretation and spirit of some people that I do not agree with. I get the feeling from those people that they are not willing to do that toward me."

"That to me is a thing we are going to have to do an awful lot of homework on. We're not going to agree on points of view. So how do we get to the point where we're willing to support each other even when we don't agree? It's a matter of spirit and a matter of attitudes and that's where we're going to have to work," Lolley said.

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(High is managing editor of the Biblical Recorder, newsjournal of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.)

Parents Must Provide  
Examples For Youth

By Jim Lowry

Baptist Press  
10/30/85

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (BP)—In a painful indictment of some parents, three youth ministers attending a national conference in Williamsburg said many youth lack a deep spiritual commitment because there are not enough positive examples in their homes.

"Many parents are so busy taking youth to band, ballgames and other entertainment that there is no time left for family," explained David Ezell, a combination youth/music minister at First Southern Baptist Church in Evansville, Ind. "The house becomes just a place to eat and sleep."

"Youth don't see their parents pray or read the Bible at home so they don't see any value in daily prayer and Bible study," Ezell said. "I guess they wonder if there's really anything to living a daily Christian life."

Roger Underwood, minister of youth at Forest Hills Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C., said he believes Southern Baptist churches must reach into homes to significantly affect youth for spiritual growth.

To begin the process of ministering to parents and youth in his church, Underwood scheduled a parent-youth retreat. Although youth were "appalled" at the idea initially, Underwood said he soon discovered a real hunger for communication between parents and youth.

"In our first session where parents and youth met together during the retreat, the behavior ranged from uncomfortable, even combative, to tremendous dialogue," Underwood said. "Our goal is to move parents and youth from apathy and rebellion to empathy and understanding."

In many respects, youth are very much like their parents, according to Underwood. "For youth who feel religion is a burden and there is a lack of commitment, many times the parents are the same way."

Southern Baptist youth ministers need to strive to create an atmosphere in church youth groups which includes commitment, trust and unity, according to numerous opinions expressed at the conference. Youth want to feel accepted instead of worrying that they have no place in the world and nobody wants them, which are commonly expressed feelings.

One of the youth ministers shared the results of a survey he took among junior and senior high youth in his church in which a surprising 35 percent said they had experimented with premarital sex and nearly 40 percent said they either used or had tried alcohol.

When the youth minister shared the results with the parents, anonymously, there was surprise and some disbelief. He told them counseling sessions with church youth supported the findings.

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Because of the brief time available with youth, the youth ministers are convinced they cannot instill a sense of Christian devotion unless parents are involved and providing examples in the home. Several persons said they believed the behavior of youth in church frequently is an accurate reflection of the home atmosphere.

The common thread among the more 100 youth ministers attending the Youth Ministry Wide-Area Conference was that a simultaneous ministry to parents and youth is the key to achieving serious commitment among youth groups in local churches.

"Youth need to have a commitment to grow together in unity," Underwood said. That commitment requires a discipline of as little as 10 minutes each day, but it can be rewarding.

"No matter what we are doing at church, there must be spiritual examples in homes before commitments can be realized in the lives of youth," he continued.

"When so much of the world is looking out for number one, achieving unity in a youth group means accepting others," Ezell added. "You shouldn't quit loving someone because their clothes are different, or because they are quiet."

Becky Tingler, minister of youth at Fort Lewis Baptist Church, Salem, Va., said Southern Baptist churches need to encourage youth to "have a feeling of concern for someone beyond self."

Ministering to parents and youth simultaneously can yield many benefits, even though some ministers of youth feel they are neglecting the youth when they take time to minister to parents, according to Richard Ross, director of the conference and coordinator of youth ministries in the church administration department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

"One hour of work on an expanded parent ministry might affect more teenage lives than 10 hours of work directly with the young people," Ross said. "Changing a teenager's home is more likely to have a permanent impact on him or her than is almost any other area of life."

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Seminary To Acquire  
New Site For Center

Baptist Press  
10/30/85

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)—In their fall meeting, the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary board of trustees approved acquisition of a new site for its Southern California center.

Property will be acquired from the Brea Center Baptist Church in Brea, Calif. The seminary eventually will relocate from its leased space in Garden Grove, Calif. Pastor Don L. Powell extended the offer to Golden Gate after a unanimous quorum vote by the church. The church will have continued use of the property for its regular programs.

"This site will amply accommodate the church's need and provide space for additional parking and new construction," according to board chairman O.Q. (Dick) Quick. Golden Gate will assume the existing indebtedness to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and conduct appropriate studies for presentation to the trustees regarding construction of facilities.

A fund-raising effort is planned for financing construction of the new building. "We hope to complete the needed facilities and be ready for occupancy at the beginning of the fall semester in 1987," Quick said.

Located on Randolph Avenue, the location is conveniently accessible from major highways in the greater Los Angeles area and is in the immediate vicinity of a highly-developed shopping center.

"As our enrollment continues to grow, we are excited about the move to Brea, and look forward to the continued expansion of our programs," said Thurmond George, seminary vice-president at the Southern California Center.

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