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March 20, 1986

86-39

Parents Must Help

Prevent Abuse: Wooden

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The most important thing parents can do to prevent the abuse or molestation of their children is to "sit down on the rug with them" and teach them about sex and how to avoid the "lures" of molesters, Kenneth Wooden told 400 participants in a national ethics seminar in Nashville, Tenn.

Wooden, an investigative reporter for ABC's "20/20" and founder of the National Coalition on Children's Justice, spoke twice on the escalating problems of child molestation and how to prevent them to the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's annual seminar.

Earlier in his career, Wooden managed several political campaigns. Now he said his political party is parents and his cause is the children of America.

After interviewing hundreds of parents of murdered children and persons who had been abused as children, Wooden said, "I made a promise I would tell it like it is for them."

In his two presentations, he painted a picture of horror which he charged is closely linked to Satanism.

"Children are not being molested; they're being tortured," he said. "Molesters need to murder a child for sexual gratification. The only way they can become sexually aroused is to hear the screaming and yelling of little children. That is their centerfold."

The months of March and April bring the highest reported incidents of child molestation, Wooden said, which corresponds to the high holy days of Satan worshipers. Many other crimes against children are directly linked to the Satanic calendar, he added.

Wooden warned molesters are organized on an international scale with a sophisticated network of newsletters, computers and information. He cited publications such as a booklet, "How to Have Sex with Children," which sells for \$1.60. Sales of equipment used in acts of sado-masochism top \$10 billion annually, he reported.

"If we start tonight, we are years behind the sophistication of the molesters. They have a common bond--your kid. They feel they're winning, and I hate to tell you, they are winning."

Wooden, who is the author of a booklet, "Child Lures," which outlines 13 common ways molesters lure children into their company, urged widespread education and prevention programs in homes, churches, schools, day care centers and communities.

He said molesters have repeatedly told him the easiest children to capture are those who know little or nothing about sex.

"The really good news is we can prevent most of these crimes," he said. "We can reach the children. They are so bright and beautiful. We must give them the information. An hour of learning will last a lifetime."

Wooden said one of the greatest needs in locating missing children is a nationwide tracking system. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's computerized system "is so outdated it cannot conduct electronic searches. Never, with the system we now have intact, can we find lost children."

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He blamed ongoing conflict between the U.S. Congress and the FBI for the lack of a national computer network. He said his hope lies not with government but with the private sector.

"I think it (the system) should come from good Christian computer experts who would give it as a gift to the children of the next generation. I'm so weary of bureaucrats and the greed of computer companies."

Wooden, who said he has moved from full-time to part-time work in order to be a full-time parent and grandparent, said solutions lie with marshalling forces of caring persons willing to lay aside their preoccupation with adult issues.

"We need moral outrage. By God, this is wrong," he exhorted. "It really is wrong if we do nothing. We will desecrate the deaths of molested children if we don't learn from their experiences. There is a wonderful opportunity to protect children."

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Committee On Boards  
Meets Under Shadow

By Dan Martin

Baptist Press  
3/20/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Under the shadow of twin lawsuits, the 1986 Southern Baptist Convention Committee on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees met March 13-14 to nominate 213 persons to places on SBC boards of trustees.

The committee is the focus of two lawsuits--one in federal court and the other in Georgia state court--filed by nine laypersons from eight states, challenging the election of the committee at the 1985 annual meeting of the SBC in Dallas.

The suits seek to have the election of the committee declared invalid and to prevent the group from reporting at the 1986 annual meeting, scheduled June 10-12 in Atlanta.

Harold C. Bennett, president of the SBC Executive Committee, briefed the committee on the lawsuit, saying the SBC's primary defense is that the issue regards the "internal governance" of the convention, a "purely ecclesiastical body," and that the U.S. Constitution prevents any court from interfering in internal matters of religious groups.

He told the committee U.S. District Judge Robert Hall has not ruled on the SBC's motion to have the suit dismissed, nor has the judge ruled regarding whether the committee was legally elected, whether it could meet and whether it can report. In the absence of a ruling, Bennett said, the committee was meeting, although an adverse ruling by Judge Hall could wipe out its work and leave the convention in limbo, with the possibility of having to nominate all 213 persons from the floor during the annual meeting.

The responsibility of the Committee on Boards, under the SBC Constitution, is to nominate persons as directors or trustees of the Executive Committee, four general boards, six seminaries, seven commissions, Southern Baptist Foundation, three standing committees and Southern Baptist representatives to the Baptist World Alliance and North American Baptist Fellowship.

Currently, 949 trustees are on the boards of the 24 entities. Under the SBC system of rotating boards, about 25 percent of the positions on each board or committee become vacant each year, about half of which are eligible for a second term.

The 1986 Committee on Boards acted on 213 positions, of which 102 were held by persons eligible for renomination to a second term and 108 posts which require new nominees. Three positions were not refilled because of previously approved plans to decrease board sizes.

Under provisions of the Constitution, the report of the Committee on Boards will be released to the denominational news service, Baptist Press, "at least 45 days in advance of the annual meeting."

Unless an adverse ruling is handed down by the federal judge, the names of those appointed and any other actions taken by the committee will be released through Baptist Press April 24-25, Bennett said.

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Lee Roberts Sr., a businessman from Marietta, Ga., and chairman of the Committee on Boards, said the lawsuits were not discussed by committee members except for Bennett's briefing.

Roberts, a member of Eastside Baptist Church of Marietta, a suburb of Atlanta, said the suits "never entered my mind. The suits are something we have no control over. The judge is going to rule and I cannot do anything about that. I simply came to do what the Southern Baptist Convention asked me to do and that is all I can do."

The committee, Roberts said, met in "executive session" because some members indicated "they would be uncomfortable talking about people and character" with anyone else in the room.

Prior to going into executive session, the committee voted to adopt three resolutions which have guided previous Committees on Boards.

One of the resolutions is that if a person is eligible for a second term, he or she will be reappointed "unless there is good and sufficient reason" not to do so. Another says Committee on Boards members will not nominate for first terms members of the Committee on Committees which nominated them. The third is that members of the Committee on Boards will not nominate fellow Committee on Boards members for first terms.

The action was taken without opposition.

Roberts said the committee named him spokesman and adopted provisions that "no one else will speak to the press, Baptist Press, the state Baptist newspapers, the secular press or 'interested parties' about the work of the committee."

The layman, who said he only became involved in convention affairs a year ago and will be attending his first annual meeting of the SBC at the 1986 session in Atlanta, declined to comment on specifics and content of the report until it is released, but did agree to talk about the committee meeting in general terms.

"Our report contains resolutions where we will ask the messengers (at the convention) to take some action that will help the peace process. Rather than just turn in names, we are going to say something. We will say to them (messengers) that we don't want division and that we have worked hard to bring the best nominees possible," Roberts said.

When asked if he believes the report of the committee will be "healing" to the denomination, Roberts said: "Healing is kind of hard when you have two sides who, for theological purposes, say they can't compromise their positions. I believe it is the responsibility of the Committee on Boards to bring to the convention the very best nominees we can bring for any and every position."

Roberts added he does not think "it is the responsibility of the Committee on Boards to get rid of (at the seminaries) anything we don't approve of."

He said: "I personally believe in inerrancy. I would like to see that the people I have anything to do with nominating are inerrantists, but at the same time, I don't feel I have that right."

Roberts said after he was named to the committee in 1985, he wrote to "leaders in the state (Georgia) on both sides of the aisle and asked them for their nominations. I did not receive a single nomination from those on the 'left side of the aisle,' although I did get one letter thanking me for my letter and another from a pastor who said he would send some suggestions later."

Since he asked for suggestions and received none, Roberts said he thinks it would be unfair if the Georgia nominees are challenged.

Roberts became chairman of the committee when he was elected during the February meeting of the SBC Executive Committee, replacing Tom Elliff, who left Colorado to accept the pastorate of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla.

"When I was elected, I was somewhat awestricken," Roberts said. "After I agreed, I realized I didn't have the capacity; I had never done anything like this before. But it is something God has seen fit to do, and he is never caught by surprise.

"I took it from that basis and began to pray about it daily. I wrote to the other members of the committee and asked them to keep a list of all committee members and to pray for each member daily. We have been seeking God's direction on this."

Since being elected, he said he has written all of the members and "tried to call as many as I could."

The members, he said, were "well prepared for their work. I told them as we finished, that I think the meeting had the best Christian spirit of any meeting I had ever attended. There was no bickering or tempers and we had agreement in almost every area from the beginning."

Attending the meeting were two representatives from West Virginia Baptists, elected by the Executive Committee after the congregations in the state presented information they have exceeded 25,000 members, the minimum number required for representation on the convention's boards.

Since the issue of West Virginia representation must be acted on at the SBC annual meeting, the nominations and votes of the two West Virginians were kept separately in case a question arises over their participation.

With the inclusion of West Virginia, the membership on the committee went from 52 to 54.

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Baptist Layman Urges  
Recovery Of Morality

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press  
3/20/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptists are in danger of losing their Baptist distinctives, and they must look within themselves to reclaim any sense of morality, a layman told participants in a national seminar on Christian ethics.

"Today Southern Baptists are becoming non-Baptist. I fear we already are more non-Baptist than Baptist," Norman Cavender, a farmer from Claxton, Ga., said during the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission's national seminar in Nashville, Tenn.

Among examples of non-Baptist activity among Southern Baptists, Cavender cited the proclamation by one minister that the pastor is "ruler" of the church, statements by another pastor that lay people in his church must vote his way if they are going to be messengers to the SBC annual meeting and statements by others who would dictate how fellow Baptists must interpret portions of Scripture.

These statements are contrary to who Baptists are because they fly in the face of such long-held Baptist doctrines as soul competency and the priesthood of the individual believer, he said.

Cavender suggested Christians, and his fellow Southern Baptists in particular, look within themselves to recover a sense of morality and integrity which would guide them back to a right relationship with Jesus Christ.

"Morality has to mean conformity to those principles embodied in Jesus Christ," he said. "If we are to recover morality, we must first be able to see morality. Seeing it means clearing away all the stuff that has grown up and obscured it."

Cavender then offered several areas where Christians might look for morality:

--"Legalized gambling"--"I refer to the religious lottery operated on radio, television and from local churches in that scheme called the 'gospel of prosperity,'" he explained. "The operators claim that if you have enough spiritual tickets, God will make you rich, famous and handsome and give all your children straight teeth."

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--"Exorbitant profiteering"--"The Christian gospel is being peddled like cans of dog food and bars of soap," he said of media preachers who offer "free" gospel-related products to listeners who send in tax-deductible "contributions." He criticized the "obscene profiteering" of the tactic, as well as the way it promotes tax evasion.

--"Dirty politics"--"Spying and secret tape recordings are considered proper conduct by some of our people," he said. "Mud-slinging has been elevated to a Christian art form. Slander is practiced and called 'defending the faith.' Deceit is called 'protecting the Bible.'"

--"Counterfeit currency"--This is not fake money but "the bogus paper of ministerial credentials," he said, noting the mail-order purchase of doctor's degrees from unaccredited institutions.

--"Cheap evangelism"--Although Christ's gospel proclaims concern for those who presently are poor and homeless, "many 'evangelists' today...are little more than religious travel agents, touting trips to the sweet by-and-by with no concern for the people in the here and now," he said.

--"Spiritual abortion"--Pointing to the 1950s, when churches were closed to newly-converted black people, he said: "We see the same happening today as new life of ministry stirs among Baptist women. The opponents of new life are doing all in their power to terminate it."

--"Social gospel"--This topic is concerned with "the gospel patterned after the standards of society rather than the standards of Christ," he said. "We are honoring what the world honors--numbers, size and fame. Those things loved by society are now being added to our churches to keep society happy. In one of the greatest ironies of history, the very symbol of pagan Rome--the bath of luxury--is now found down at the church of Jesus Christ" in recreation center saunas.

In a question-and-answer session, Cavender related several themes of his subject to current issues among Southern Baptists.

When asked for a layperson's opinion about a statement by W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, that the pastor is the "ruler" of the church, Cavender said: "I'm not surprised by that statement, because people always want power over other people. What surprises me is that Baptist laypeople will allow this.... That (Criswell's statement) is not priesthood of the believer, but popehood of the preacher."

Speaking of peace within the SBC, he claimed: "We could have peace overnight if we would get back to being Baptist--accepting one another, (going to SBC annual meetings and) voting Baptist, which is voting for openness, tolerance, an open Bible. I'll accept anyone of good spirit. I ask only that they extend to me the same right."

Cavender noted one 50-page booklet currently being circulated by Southern Baptists who find fault with the convention's seminaries and agencies is "the funniest document I've seen."

"One person they're charging as being a liberal is dead. What do they want to do with Clyde Francisco (former Old Testament professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary), dig him up and shoot him?"

"Some documents to which they refer are 35 years old, written by people who are no longer Southern Baptists," he said. "The Internal Revenue doesn't hold a mistake against anyone that long. If we tried, maybe we could be as Christian as the IRS."

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Wayland, Louisiana College  
Cagers Finish 2-3 In Tourney

By Oscar Hoffmeyer Jr.

Baptist Press  
3/20/86

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Two women's basketball teams from Baptist colleges finished in the top three from among 460 schools affiliated with the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics during the national tournament held in Kansas City, Mo., in mid-March.

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Wayland Baptist University's Flying Queens took second place in the tournament, falling to Francis Marion of South Carolina 75-65 in the championship. Louisiana College Lady Wildcats won the consolation trophy with an 85-74 win over Georgia Southwestern.

Wayland earlier defeated Louisiana College 88-81 in a semi-final game prior to the final four contests.

Louisiana College was seeded No. 2 going into the tournament and completed the season with a 31-3 season record. Wayland, seeded No. 3, ended the season at 31-5. The Lady Wildcats were ranked No. 1 in the nation for several weeks until Francis Marion overtook them in the final two weeks.

Both Baptist schools placed two players on the all-tournament team. Tracy Tatum and Carmen Wynn were the Wayland players, and Janice Joseph and Marilyn Davis represented Louisiana College.

The Lady Wildcats are coached by Sheila Thompson Johnson, a former Louisiana College basketball star who is in her first year as a college coach. The school, with an enrollment of about 1,400, is affiliated with the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

The Flying Queens are coached by Floyd Evans, who assumed the position in mid-year. The school, with an enrollment of about 1,600, is affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

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Former Education Secretary  
Raps Critics; Praises Reagan

By Stan Hasteley

Baptist Press  
3/20/86

WASHINGTON (BP)--Terrel H. Bell, secretary of education during President Reagan's first term in office, has come out swinging at right-wing critics who he says hounded him throughout his four years as head of the department for failing to enact what they called the "Reagan Revolution."

At the same time, Bell—who earlier was U.S. commissioner of education during the administrations of Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford—had praise for Reagan who, he said, "supported his Cabinet tenaciously, whether they were under attack from the Right or the Left."

In an article in the March issue of "Phi Delta Kappan" magazine, Bell described the right wing of the Republican party as consisting of Reagan revolutionaries whose views on education "did not represent the views of the president." Instead, he said, "They took his guiding principles and carried them to the lunatic fringes of ideological political thought." The magazine is the monthly journal of Phi Delta Kappa, professional fraternity of education.

Calling his critics "zealots" who "blamed me for many policy proposals that were actually the president's," Bell further described Reagan as a president "firmly in charge of his administration" and as a leader possessed "of strength, conviction and courage" who "supported me in most of my endeavors and was always fair and open in his decision making."

Bell, whose article has put him back in the public eye in recent days, recalled taking the position of secretary of education, "realizing, above all else, that I was expected to abolish my own department as quickly as possible." During the 1980 presidential campaign, Reagan had promised to dismantle the department, created by former President Jimmy Carter. Although that was to be his primary objective, Bell noted, "movement" conservatives who claimed credit for Reagan's election unwittingly blunted that goal by insisting the federal government get out of the field of education altogether.

Bell and Reagan early reached agreement to replace the department with a smaller agency to be built along the lines of the National Science Foundation. Such an agency, Bell said, would allow the president to keep his campaign promise but preserve a needed federal role in the field, a role Bell insisted Reagan favored. But even inside his department, the proposal "received little support because the movement would have no part of anything less than total elimination of the department and all its programs." These "true movement conservatives," Bell said further, "believe that not a dime of federal money should be spent on education."

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They lost their battle to abolish the department and forbid any federal role in the field, Bell said, when the platform committee at the 1984 Republican National Convention "overwhelmingly rejected" their views. "In my view, the continued existence of (the department) is now assured," Bell wrote.

He expressed frustration with these movement conservatives for "constantly sniping at me both from inside the administration and in the pages of the most extreme organs of the right-wing press," adding, "Many Republicans are frightened by the uncompromising viciousness of this movement."

Although Bell acknowledged President Reagan's views on educational matters were more conservative than his own, he insisted his overall philosophy more closely squared with Reagan's than did those of his right-wing adversaries. Among ideas approved by the president--besides that of replacing the department with an independent foundation--were continued financial aid to poor and handicapped pupils at the elementary and secondary levels and Pell grants to needy college students.

But movement conservatives refused to accept the idea that Reagan supported such initiatives, insisting instead on what Bell called "radical, off-the-wall interpretations of his intent." His feud with the right wingers went unchecked, he wrote, because the administration never stated a comprehensive policy on education.

Ironically, that very fact might have saved Bell as secretary in the face of movement demands for his ouster, virtually from the day his selection was announced. More important than his own job security, Bell insisted in the article, if movement conservatives had carried the day within the administration, "American education would have been changed so dramatically that the system of public education as we know it today would no longer exist."

And, he concluded, "had it not been for the power and strategic position of the Cabinet-level office that I held, more of the revolutionary and shockingly radical agenda of the far Right would have been realized" during Reagan's first term.

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Evangelism, Conversion, Baptism  
Need New Study, Historian Says

Baptist Press  
3/20/86

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--Southern Baptists must re-examine their understanding of evangelism, conversion and baptism, a Baptist church historian told students and faculty at Oklahoma Baptist University during the 12th Hobbs Lecture.

"Serious attention needs to be given to a theology of baptism so as to recover its biblical and historic meaning for children and adults, new converts and long-time believers," said Bill J. Leonard, associate professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. "To continue to count new converts and rebaptized believers from other traditions as if they were all new Christians is to confuse evangelism and the baptismal symbol for the sake of yearly statistics."

Leonard provided an historical and theological perspective of Southern Baptists' beliefs on the nature of conversion and evangelism by citing traditions taken from Calvinism, the Arminians, the Separate Baptists, the Landmark movement, revivalism and the catechetical or nurturing tradition of Southern Baptist church life which shapes those beliefs.

"Efforts at uniting these diverse, sometimes contradictory, traditions have created considerable debate and controversy in Southern Baptist life," Leonard said, noting Baptists do agree conversion requires a personal encounter with Jesus Christ and not merely an intellectual assent to certain doctrines about him.

During the last century, Southern Baptists have moved away from the Calvinistic understanding of election and conversion but have retained the Calvinistic terminology and redefined it with a greater emphasis on free will and human participation in the salvation process, Leonard said.

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Although Southern Baptists have followed this Arminian-type theology stressing a person's free will to choose, reject or ignore salvation, they have repudiated the Arminian emphasis on "falling from grace" and retained the Calvinistic belief in the perseverance of the saints.

"This doctrine of going on in faith was popularized into the slogan, 'once saved, always saved,' a phrase that many believed could deteriorate into cheap grace and an easy ticket to heaven, undermining the enduring cost of discipleship," Leonard said. "This popularized view of perseverance undermined the doctrine of sanctification in Southern Baptist life."

He noted the legacy of Landmarkism as creating confusion among Southern Baptists regarding the nature of baptism. The Landmarkers changed the New Testament practice of baptism as a profession of faith for new Christians to baptism as the way both old and new converts could join a Baptist church, and through this created two types of baptism--baptism into Christ and baptism into a Baptist church.

The Regular and Separate Baptists' tradition of revivalism, which Southern Baptists have used most frequently as a means of evangelizing the masses, has caused salvation to become less an extended process than an immediate event; has produced a set of outward symbols to portray an inner spiritual experience, such as "walking the aisle" or "shaking the preacher's hand;" and has helped to turn conversion from a process of experience with grace into a transaction which fulfills a salvation requirement, Leonard said.

"We therefore create generations of immature Christians who never get beyond the initial stage of faith and who live on the edge of doubt that they might not have prayed the right prayer or said the right words in order to complete the necessary transaction," he explained.

For the last 50 to 60 years, more Southern Baptists have come to Christian faith through being nurtured as a child brought up in the church, Leonard said. They have become Christians out of a response to that nurturing and not as the result of profound moral crisis. Southern Baptists must not stop at the point of baptizing children and nurturing them to salvation but must take the responsibility for helping them grow up in the faith so they are able to face the moral dilemmas of adolescence without rejecting the validity of childhood grace, he said.

"Each (of Southern Baptists' historical traditions) helps us understand who we are and why we act as we do," Leonard noted. "Each holds the potential to enliven or entrap us in evangelical renewal or confusion."

Herschel H. Hobbs received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Oklahoma Baptist University during the service. Hobbs is pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

The Herschel H. and Frances J. Hobbs Lectureship in Baptist Faith and Heritage deals with Baptist theology, Baptist history, studies of the Bible and other related themes.

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Wayland's Athletic Program  
Boosts Missions Emphasis

Baptist Press  
3/20/86

PLAINVIEW, Texas (BP)--A successful athletic program is providing Wayland Baptist University with the impetus for mission emphasis like never before.

Few sports fans will argue that Wayland, located in Plainview, Texas, has positioned itself at the top of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. The Pioneer men's and women's track teams both won the 1986 NAIA indoor national championship in Kansas City, Mo., making history in the process.

The two Wayland titles marked the first time the same school has swept both men's and women's championships in any classification. In the process, Wayland athletes earned nine individual national championships and 43 All-America honors--in only one meet.

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Those honors come on the heels of a 1984-85 athletic year in which the men's track team won the indoor title and finished second nationally outdoors, the Flying Queens basketball team finished third at the NAIA Tournament and the Pioneers basketball team was national runner-up after losing the championship game by two points in overtime.

"We made a commitment a few years ago that we would field only a few athletic teams (men's and women's teams in only four sports), but in those few we would be the very best that we could be," explains President David L. Jester.

With collegiate athletics under fire in recent history due to large-scale abuses, Wayland athletic director Sylvia Nadler has had to answer the questions that follow success. But, Nadler says, bringing home trophies is not what it's all about.

"I have very strong feelings about the worth of our program," says Nadler, a Wayland alumnus. "As our athletic programs draw attention to the university, the university draws attention to Christian thought, so it is a cyclical process. Our success is not just to the glory of our teams, but most especially to the glory of God."

Wayland athletes have drawn attention, not only for their performances but also for their attitudes and conduct. At the national basketball tournament last year, the Pioneers used the opportunity to share their Christian faith, filling up three rows of seats at the First Baptist Church of North Kansas City on Sunday of the tournament. As they left Kansas City, team members presented Bibles to their honorary coaches as special gifts.

The mission emphasis, however, has taken on special meaning at Wayland because of foreign athletes who attend the university. Wayland's impact on these students is best exemplified in Devon Morris, a sophomore from Jamaica.

Wayland's most decorated athlete ever--already a six-time national champion and 10-time All-America--Morris was named most valuable performer at the NAIA indoor finals in February and was contacted by numerous larger schools last summer after his freshman year.

Part of that freshman season was his profession of faith, which has become Morris' reason for turning down offers from other schools. "Devon has told me he chooses to remain at Wayland because this is where he found his Lord," says Jester.

"We try and relate to people of the media and others who ask (about foreign athletes) that, as a church-related institution, Wayland has some very different objectives than the state schools who brought in foreign athletes simply to win national championships," says John Creer, head track and field coach.

"We tell them that Wayland has a great heritage and concern for foreign missions, and this missions approach has overlapped into athletics. We know some doors have been closing on the foreign mission field, and we feel our program here has allowed us to open up some new doors.

"We feel," Creer adds, "that we can have an impact on them for Christ while they are at Wayland. If we can have a positive effect on them here, then maybe they can have a similar impact on their home country when they return."

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World Missions Conferences  
Draw More Churches

Baptist Press  
3/20/86

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptist World Missions Conferences last year attracted "the best church participation in 20 years," said Carlos Cobos, director of the conferences for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

In 1985, 3,735 Southern Baptist churches participated in 176 conferences drawing a total attendance of 1,080,752 participants, Cobos reported.

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In his annual report to state World Missions Conferences directors, Cobos said 1985 participation increased by eight state conventions, 20 associations, 876 churches and 242,505 participants. State conventions with the largest number of participating churches were Georgia (492), Kentucky (339), Tennessee (342), North Carolina (223), Louisiana (222), Alabama (221) and Missouri (216).

Other highlights in the annual report were 431 persons who volunteered for missions during the conferences, 376 professions of faith in Christ and receipt of \$1,098,779 for missions.

World Missions Conferences are administered by the Brotherhood Commission in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, the Home Mission Board and state conventions involving associations and churches.

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