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**Former Inerrantist Leader
Calls For SBC Reconciliation**

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — A former crusader against liberalism in the Southern Baptist Convention has apologized for the hurt he has brought and pleaded for concessions from both sides in the SBC controversy.

Clark Pinnock, professor of systematic theology at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, spoke at the Southern Baptist Conference on Biblical Inerrancy at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center. Pinnock taught at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary from 1965 to 1969, when he campaigned against liberalism in the convention.

"If you listened to me in the '60s about the dangers of liberal theology, perhaps you will listen to me now," Pinnock told about 1,000 people attending the conference sponsored by the six SBC seminaries.

Pinnock said he has not changed "one whit in the matter of holding to the Bible as the inspired word of God." Although he led the fight against liberalism in SBC schools in the 1960s, he said the current controversy has gone too far.

Since 1979, Southern Baptists have battled for control of the denomination's agencies, institutions and schools. Much of the debate between moderate-conservatives and fundamental-conservatives has centered on biblical authority or truthfulness.

In contrast to the 1960s, Pinnock said, he currently sees "a great evangelical denomination dangerously divided." The current debate is not between inerrancy or non-inerrancy but between an elaborate, structured view of inerrancy versus a simpler, experienced-based view, he said.

"I wish that Southern Baptists would see that within evangelicalism outside their context we have been able to maintain some peace and cooperative effort between those who think it is very important to hold a strict definition of inerrancy and those who prefer a more open attitude to the text of Scripture," Pinnock said.

"Is it that you are so numerically large that you feel you have the luxury of fighting with one another without any thought of the scandal you are causing for the Baptists and others watching from other parts of the world, or of the dangerous possibility that the Baptist work may suffer among you, too?" Pinnock asked.

"To throw out a couple of liberals you are going to hurt a lot of good people who happen to love God," he said.

As a start toward peace, Pinnock suggested both sides, whom he termed "moderates" and "militants," sign the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy developed by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy.

Moderates must "make it much clearer than they have wanted to in the past that they are in fact biblical conservatives and evangelical Christians," Pinnock said. "I urge the moderates to confess the faith clearly, distinguishing it as forcefully from the errors on the left as they presently do from errors on the right."

At the same time, Pinnock said militants must "stop behaving as if they are Roman Catholics. Behind inerrancy lies the desire to secure God's truth invincibly so it cannot be lost or distorted. The logic of orthodoxy taken to its full extent can lead on right to Rome," he said.

Pinnock commended the six SBC seminary presidents for adopting "language of inerrancy" in their "Glorieta Statement" issued to the SBC Peace Committee Oct. 20, 1986. The Ridgecrest conference was one promise the presidents made in the "Glorieta Statement" as a means to bring peace to the SBC.

The two speakers responding to Pinnock's address found different reasons to praise him and object to him.

Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, called Pinnock his "beloved mentor."

Yet Patterson said he now grieves for his "professor who has forsaken the prophetic pulpit of Luther for the indecisive desk of Erasmus and the certainty of Paul for the vascillation of the Athenians who must always 'hear some new thing.'"

On the other hand, William Hull, provost at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., said he remembered Pinnock as a "brash young new professor at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary who unleashed a sustained and withering attack on many of my best friends."

Ironically, Hull said, Pinnock has now written a paper which espouses prudence, charity, tolerance and a plea for Southern Baptists to live in harmony.

Patterson agreed with Pinnock's plea for peace but said Pinnock's "price for peace is too high. He would have us stand at the judgment seat of Christ and try to explain to the enthroned Christ that in the interest of peace in the convention we supported either by silence or by resources those who say that his word errs."

In a response after Patterson's and Hull's comments, Pinnock apologized for pain he caused Southern Baptists in the '60s and the problems created by his changing views in the '80s.

"I want to say I'm sorry. I've probably hurt everyone in this room," Pinnock said. But he added his opposition in the 1960s was right and necessary and that the tide of liberalism has been turned back.

The crucial question now, he said, is one he cannot solve but revolves around whether current charges of liberalism by Patterson and others are exaggerated.

"I'm so worried in having corrected a fault that we'll go too far and hurt a lot of people," Pinnock said.

In a second address the same day, Pinnock said a strong stand on inerrancy is difficult because it has no universally agreed-upon definition.

"Inerrancy is not the firm and clear category we are being told that it is," he said. "It is supposed to be the very answer to all our problems, and yet the inerrantists themselves cannot agree on what it signifies.

"Even though honest inerrantists surely must know that their favorite category is not clear or firm, some of them are intent upon ramming the strict version of it down the throats of others," Pinnock said. "This is unfair and disturbing.

"Obviously some people are spoiling for a fight, and inerrancy is apparently not the real reason but only the occasion," he said.

In response to Pinnock's second address, Adrian Rogers said the doctrine of inerrancy can be defended and was agreed on by 300 theologians who drafted the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy in 1978.

"Every doctrine brings differences of opinion, but differences don't invalidate the doctrine," said Rogers, SBC president and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn.

John Lewis, retired pastor of First Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C., also responded to the second address.

Lewis said that until recently Baptists have never used a single word, unsubstantiated by the Bible, as a test of fellowship or faith. But the word "inerrancy" is now being used as a "quasi-creedal weapon" to coerce conformity, contrary to Baptist practice, he said.

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(Contributing to this story were Linda Lawson, Lonnie Wilkey, Ken Camp, Toby Druin and Mark Wingfield.)

(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers from Ridgecrest Conference Center.

Mexican Teenager Receives
Christ's Love In Nashville

By Marcia Addison Knox

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5/7/87

BRENTWOOD, Tenn. (BP)—A paralyzed Mexican teenager has learned Christ's love transcends all communication, denominational and community barriers.

Cleofas Jaramillo, a 16-year-old Mexican construction worker who spent more than a month in a Nashville hospital, had all his medical and emotional needs met through the combined efforts of individuals, corporations, agencies and several area churches.

Jaramillo, who had been at Donelson Hospital with a broken neck and spinal cord since March 2 when he fell from a scaffold, has been moved by air ambulance to the Texas Institute for Research and Rehabilitation, said Epifanio Patino, a Spanish-language interpreter for the Metro Nashville Court System.

"Cleofas is going to walk with the help of God," Patino said. "People are praying and praying."

Patino, who was called to the hospital upon recommendation by the Tennessee Baptist Convention missions department, developed a special relationship with "the very sensitive, Catholic boy with a great belief."

"Being paralyzed from the waist down and not being able to communicate with the doctors and nurses at the hospital made it worse for Cleofas," Patino said. "Cleofas was very appreciative and never dreamed of receiving any type of help. It really didn't matter to him whether the people praying were Baptist or Catholic."

Jaramillo, whose emotional independence has progressed since his injury, will receive therapy to regain use of his hands.

"After a stay of three to four months, Cleofas will be transferred to a small apartment where he will learn to take care of himself. Then he will eventually return to live with his mother in Matamoros, Mexico," Patino said.

Jaramillo's employer, the Cheyenne Construction Company of Houston, will provide workman's compensation insurance coverage for more than \$50,000 in hospital bills.

There is also workman's compensation money that has been set aside in a trust fund for Cleofas until he is 18 years old, Patino reported.

But even more important than meeting medical needs was the establishment of an emotional support system provided by the prayers and financial support of the Nashville community.

A community chest fund administered by First Baptist Church of Donelson was used to bring the Jaramillo family from Mexico to Nashville to be with their son. Crossing all denominational and community barriers, the First Baptist Church fund received financial as well as material donations from across the community.

Donations to the family included transportation, food, hotel rooms, linens and other material needs, said W. Roy Fisher, pastor at First Baptist Church.

To help meet the financial needs of the family, donations were received from the Nashville Baptist Association, the Donelson-Hermitage Ministerial Association, St. Jones Lutheran Church, Sunday school classes and numerous other corporate and professional groups, Fisher said.

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"But the majority of the credit should go to Patino, who took the Jaramillo family into his home," Fisher said.

One of Jaramillo's sisters flew with him to Houston, where other members of his family live, Patino said. The remainder of the \$1,800 fund was presented to his parents before they left Nashville.

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(Marcia Addison Knox works in the Tennessee Baptist Convention public relations office.)

New Orleans Churches Reach
Lost Despite Economic Slump

By Frank Wm. White

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NEW ORLEANS, La. (BP)—A faltering economy has battered the Mississippi River delta like a costal hurricane, creating new challenges for the 104 Southern Baptist churches and missions in the Greater New Orleans Baptist Association.

The churches, whether in affluent subdivisions on the shores of Lake Pontchartrain or in destitute communities on the river delta, are striving to minister to people and reach the lost.

"We are returning to mission work in New Orleans. The transplanted Southern Baptists left when the jobs ended. Now we're working to reach the people who are here," explained Irvin Boudreaux, pastor of First Baptist Church, Gretna, on the New Orleans West Bank.

Between 50 and 60 percent of the population is unchurched, according to Nolan Johnston, director of missions.

Consequently, Johnston said, New Orleans Baptists must reach outside traditional church circles to minister to the community. "If we are going to win our city to Christ it won't be in the church, it will be in the marketplace."

First Baptist Church, Gretna, is struggling to become a local church even though it was started in 1918.

"Many New Orleans churches grew in the '50s and '60s as people moved to the area for oil-related jobs. Now, as the economy sags, the churches are finding they need to reach those in the community," Boudreaux said.

When transplants retire, they return to where they came from, said Mike Ramage, pastor of West St. Charles Baptist Church.

The average age of the membership at West St. Charles is 37 because retirees leave, Ramage said. "We're working to change that by organizing the Sunday school for evangelistic outreach."

Even making the community aware a Southern Baptist church is in the neighborhood can be a dilemma for some churches in New Orleans. East Edgewater Baptist Church, for example, looks much like the racquet club that once occupied the property.

With an Olympic-size swimming pool, tennis courts and an expansive grassy lawn at lake's edge, the church is surrounded by homes in a planned-development community. The association got the property for a church location when the community association was unable to maintain the clubhouse.

Quarterly concerts with Christian artists such as Cynthia Clawson help make the community aware of the church, said pastor Joe Lovelady.

Fifty miles down the river in the bayou, City Price Baptist Church doesn't let job despair impede growth or training for church workers.

"Some people have said this church won't grow. I believe it will grow because our people have caught the spirit of evangelism," said pastor Danny McVay.

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Gloom and doom predictions for the church are based on the economy of the community. Only two members of the congregation have jobs.

In spite of this, the church's Sunday school enrollment has grown from 36 to 72 since McVay became pastor 18 months ago. He said all of the church's Sunday school, church training and missions organizations workers have attended at least two training conferences in their work areas.

The economy has created a ministry opportunity in the community for the church. McVay and other church members have been training to be literacy instructors. A clothes closet and food bank help the church minister to people in the community. And, a prison ministry across the river provides a missions activity.

Learning how to tell others about Christ was the focus of a recent New Orleans Witness Training Clinic. Thirty-two churches participated in the clinic sponsored by the Sunday School Board's church training and Sunday school departments and the Home Mission Board's evangelism section.

The clinic provided training for more than 1,700 church workers in evangelistic witnessing skills and how to use Sunday school materials evangelistically.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers from BSSB bureau of Baptist Press