



- - BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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April 5, 1988

88-57

N-CO
(FIB)

Distribution Of Vines'
Sermon Questioned

By Greg Warner

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Vines has been both praised and criticized for the message, which critics said was caustic and divisive. Distribution of the sermon likewise has been criticized as a political ploy because of Vines' likely nomination for SBC president this year.

In a cover letter to the mailing, which was sent out during the first week of March, Lindsay said: "Never was I more proud of my friend and co-laborer than when he delivered this message in St. Louis last year. After he was misquoted and statements he made were taken out of context and published in the Baptist Laity Journal, I felt it expedient that you have the message in your hands to read for yourself exactly what he said."

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Noting Vines' assertion that some Southern Baptists have abandoned the traditional Baptist view of the Bible as inerrant, the Journal quoted Vines, "When some of the brethren get back to where they ought to be, they'll be where I am."

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The four-color booklet includes a forward by current SBC President Adrian P. Rogers, who calls the sermon "a wonderful example of scholarship, conviction and truth." Journal Editor Rodgers said the letter from Adrian Rogers "is meant as a subtle endorsement of Jerry Vines for SBC president."

Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church of Memphis, Tenn., could not be reached for comment about the sermon.

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Gay Protest Fizzles
At Houston Church

By Ken Camp

N-TEXAS
Baptist Press
4/5/88

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Controversy arose when ^{the} musician -- hired to perform in an orchestra at the church -- was asked not to play at Palm Sunday services after ~~it was discovered~~ ^{church leaders} he had tuberculosis, ~~according to Moore.~~ ^{has} Later, ~~it was~~ ^{has} learned the musician also ~~had~~ ^{has} AIDS.

Although the church offered to pay the orchestra member even though he would not be allowed to perform, other union members of the orchestra walked out in support of him.

When gay activists learned the musician had [✓]AIDS, they said they would arrange to have 75 to 200 AIDS patients attend the Easter worship services at Second Baptist Church to "see how Christian" the church would be.

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Ministers Need Exposure

By Pat Cole

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(SBTS)

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Women should avoid a "belligerent attitude in their quest to be recognized as ministers," she said, but she warned against total passivity: "It helps to be congenial, but stand your ground. There are ways to be both gentle and kind, and at the same time be firm."

Despite wanting to become a Southern Baptist pastor, Davis said, "So far I've never been able to overcome that hurdle." She was an American Baptist pastor in New England for 17 years. In 1981, she returned to her hometown of Covington, Va., where she joined the ministerial staff of an ecumenical church that serves members from four denominations.

Nevertheless, Davis claims allegiance to both Southern Baptists and American Baptists: "I'm still as staunch a Southern Baptist as I ever was, but I'm also committed to the American Baptists for what they've done for me."

"Quibbling" in the Southern Baptist Convention about the role of women in ministry is "crippling our witness to the world," she insisted.

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N- CO
(Fla.)

Baptist Press
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Co-pastor Homer Lindsay Jr. opened the program with a 45-second spot. In a two-minute segment at the half-hour point, three teenagers testified about the virtues of abstinence from sex and drugs and the value of a relationship with Christ for personal self-esteem. The hour closed with another 45-second spot from the church.

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First Baptist got involved in the project through WTLV news anchor Jeannie Blaylock, a church member who earlier reported a five-part news series on teen sex.

"They couldn't find any teens that weren't sexually active, so that's when they came to us," Lindsay said.

The week-long series was so popular WTLV decided to do a one-hour follow-up program. Station officers asked First Baptist to be one of two sponsors, but no other sponsor was found, Lindsay said.

The church had no responsibility for the program's content, which included videotaped segments on each topic, questions from the audience and comments from several panels of educators, doctors and social workers.

Lindsay said he knew ahead of time the panels would advocate sex education in schools and the use of contraceptives by teens, but the church decided to sponsor the program anyway.

Lindsay asked the church's youth minister, Kenny St. John, to be in the studio audience. St. John, who was interviewed from the audience, said too many people are "fatalistic" about sexuality, thinking teen sex is inevitable. As a result, society does not advocate abstinence, he told the interviewer.

Lindsay said he feels the church's influence in the program is worth the \$4,200 investment. "If there are a lot of hurting parents out there ... we want them to know there is help somewhere," he said.

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WMU Centennial Celebration
Registration Closes At 11,000

By Susan Todd

N- CO
(WMU)

Baptist Press
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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Registration for the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Centennial Celebration, May 13-14 in Richmond, Va., has closed with a capacity crowd of 11,000.

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Confirmations have been sent to the first 10,000 registrants. The WMU staff now is sending out the final 1,000 confirmations, and a limited number of applications will be held on a waiting list in case of cancellations.

Questions about registration status should be directed in writing to WMU Centennial Celebration, P.O. Box C-10, Birmingham, Ala., 35283-0010.

"When plans for the Centennial Celebration began, I never dreamed that the number of participants would grow to 11,000," said Weatherford. "We are now expecting women from 46 states and from 25 foreign countries."

More than 650 regional associational WMU organizations are planning local festivities for Saturday, May 14, combined with viewing the live broadcast of the 1:30 p.m. (EST) Saturday session on the ACTS Network or Baptist Telecommunication Network, Weatherford said.

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Tours are completely booked for both the board headquarters and the learning center Thursday, May 12, and Friday, May 13, said Robert Shoemake, Foreign Mission Board assistant vice president.

However, appointments still are being accepted for Tuesday, May 10; Wednesday, May 11; Saturday, May 14; and Monday, May 16. To schedule a tour for one of these days, call (804) 353-0151.

Only people who have scheduled tours in advance will be able to tour the facilities, Shoemake said.

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Court Declines Company Appeal
In Dispute Over Sunday Work

By Stan Hastey

N- BJC
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Smith, a coal mine mechanic, ran into problems with Pyro Mining in 1982, when the company instituted a new work schedule requiring employees to work four consecutive 10-hour days followed by four days off. The new schedule meant employees would work about 26 Sundays a year. The company largely put the burden on workers who for religious reasons refused Sunday work to find their own replacements.

When Smith did not show up the first two Sundays he was scheduled to work, he was admonished by his supervisor. After he missed a third consecutive scheduled Sunday, he was fired.

Citing a provision in Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act that requires companies to make an affirmative effort "to reasonably accommodate to an employee's ... religious observance or practice," Smith took Pyro Mining to court. After a 1985 trial, the presiding judge in the federal district court for western Kentucky agreed with Smith. A divided 6th Circuit panel affirmed the trial judge, 2-1.

Attorneys for the company appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing the religious accommodation requirement in Title VII forced Pyro Mining to promote religion in violation of the First Amendment. They argued further that by enforcing the provision, the government itself likewise unlawfully promoted religion.

The company also asserted Smith's religious belief against Sunday work was not "sincerely held" and amounted to nothing more than a "mere preference based upon expediency."

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