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May 2, 1989

89-70

Mercer trustees to drop  
liberal arts in Atlanta

By Audrey Post

N-CO  
coded

MACON, Ga. (BP)--Mercer University's trustees have voted to close the Georgia Baptist institution's liberal arts school in Atlanta June 30, 1990.

Mercer owns campuses in Macon and Atlanta and operates separate liberal arts schools on both locations.

About 60 faculty and more than 700 students will be affected by the decision. Faculty previously sued the university to save the jobs of eight faculty members who had been notified of their impending dismissals. Faculty now expect to add amendments to their legal complaint, and students announced they will join the faculty in taking legal action against the university.

Opting to reduce the university's deficit over the next five years instead of immediately, the trustees also voted to convert the northeastern Atlanta campus into a graduate and professional center.

The plan includes moving the pharmacy school from downtown Atlanta to the northeastern campus, then selling the downtown property. Mercer's two business schools will be combined, with the undergraduate business program based in Macon and the graduate program and some upper division courses based in Atlanta.

Closing the Cecil B. Day College of Arts and Sciences in Atlanta will not save any money in the short term, because the loss of tuition is expected to offset any savings in operating expenses.

Charles Karcher, the acting dean of the CAS, said the "intent is to raise money through selling the land."

The downtown property now housing the pharmacy school was appraised four years ago at about \$2.5 million, said Mercer financial officer Robert McKinnon. The northeastern campus sits on 37 acres, part of a 140-acre, largely undeveloped tract owned by Mercer, he said, adding he does not have a current appraisal on the northeastern property.

"I don't know how much they're going to sell off," Karcher said.

The Mercer board voted 31-5 to close the Atlanta undergraduate school. Deans -- including Karcher -- first learned officially of the board's intention during the meeting in which the vote was taken.

"I think it would have been common courtesy to notify someone in our college," Karcher said.

David Hudson, chairman of the trustee executive committee, said Mercer's current financial problems -- including \$14 million in short-term debt not known to trustees until last December -- made operating two liberal arts colleges especially difficult. The trustees also had to deal with the pharmacy school's critical need for more space, he added.

Hudson was one of five people -- two trustees, two administrators and a member of the university's President's Council -- designated to answer questions after the board meeting. Mercer police kept reporters and the curious outside the locked doors of the state-funded medical school while the meeting was being held inside.

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Mercer's operating deficit for the current year had been projected to be from \$6 million to \$14 million. The budget approved for next year anticipates a deficit from this year of almost \$5.1 million.

This year's deficit must be added to the university's existing \$14 million short-term debt, of which almost \$11 million is loans used to cover operating deficits accumulated during the past five years.

In spreading the deficit reduction efforts over five years, the board decided not to make a formal declaration of financial exigency -- an official designation of financial emergency requiring drastic and severe cuts to ensure the survival of the university.

Mercer's nine colleges and schools will have budgets next year that are smaller than this year's, McKinnon said: "They have targeted expenditures predicated on their actual spending histories the last couple of years. Conceivably, there might have to be a few (faculty layoffs), but at this point it's in the hands of the deans."

The deans had been told to prepare budgets based on 90 percent of expenditures for the 1987-88 fiscal year, but McKinnon said that plan was not adopted because it would have been "too damaging to the educational mission, more severe than we could condone."

About \$1.5 million will be cut from the "central administrative units," McKinnon said, adding that he had not tabulated the number of positions that will be eliminated.

The university will save money long-term in closing the College of Arts and Sciences, he said, because the university would have had to pump more money into the Atlanta liberal arts program to keep it competitive with colleges in the Atlanta area.

Trustees pledged to try to place affected employees "in other suitable positions within the university if any are to become available."

In other business, the trustees:

-- Approved a 7 percent increase in undergraduate tuition, currently about \$7,000 per year for full-time students.

-- Reversed a previous decision to change the affiliation of its athletic program, deciding instead to remain within NCAA Division I. A Mercer athletics foundation will be created to support fund-raising efforts, and long-range plans call for a recreation-convocation center to be built on the Macon campus.

-- Read a resolution from the university's House of Delegates, which represents faculty from all nine colleges or schools, expressing the faculty's lack of confidence in President R. Kirby Godsey's administration and calling for new leadership.

Two trustees -- Brunswick-St. Simons attorney James B. Gilbert Jr., and Superior Court Judge Tommy Day Wilcox of Macon -- resigned, citing the board's continued support of Godsey.

Meanwhile, the Atlanta Constitution carried an editorial that called for Godsey's removal.

"The trustees justify their mysterious decision to stick with Dr. Godsey by saying his prior success in building the university has earned him the right to try to restore it to health," the editorial said. "But if they believe that the current opposition to him is limited to a few faculty malcontents in arts and sciences and long-time fundamentalist opponents, they are deluding themselves. The leadership of this university has experienced a moral failure of tragic proportions, and the whole community feels it. ..."

"Indeed, all of the board's decisions have become tainted by the performance of Dr. Godsey and his allies over the past few months. Two respected trustees have resigned in dismay. Those remaining need to recognize that if they fail to get themselves a new president, Dr. Godsey may drag them and their institution down with him."

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Also contributing to this story was William Neal, associate editor of Georgia Baptists' Christian Index. Post is a staff writer for the Macon Telegraph and News.

Three approaches emerge  
from child-care debate

By Kathy Palen

N-BJC

WASHINGTON (BP)--Congressional interest in child care is running high as evidenced by the number of related hearings that have been held and the more than 20 separate legislative proposals introduced during the opening months of the 101st Congress.

The hours of testimony and pages of proposed legislation have revealed three basic approaches to the issue of child care. Those approaches call for the federal government to provide direct funding for child-care services, tax credits for parents with preschoolers or a combination of direct subsidies and tax breaks.

Proponents of the direct-funding approach argue that comprehensive legislation is needed to deal with the cost, availability and quality of child care.

The highly publicized Act for Better Child Care Services uses this approach. The ABC bill would channel \$2.5 billion to states, which would have the option of providing direct subsidies to child-care providers and/or certificates to parents for the purchase of child-care services. The bill would establish national safety and training standards for child-care providers that receive federal funds.

"ABC is long and complex because it takes a comprehensive approach to similarly complex child-care problems," said Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund. "However, ABC does not propose a radical new approach to child-care policy and instead builds upon current state and local policies and practices. In so doing, it ensures the protection, safety and development of our children and it provides low-income parents with real and decent choices for the care of their children."

But critics of the ABC bill, as well as other proposals that would provide direct funding, oppose the establishment of national standards and say the legislation would create a new federal bureaucracy to enforce such standards.

They also contend ABC-like bills would limit parental choice, discriminate against religiously affiliated providers, help middle-income families more than low-income families and discriminate against parents who opt to stay home and care for their own children.

One critic, Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., said the ABC bill takes a "blind stab at reform in a manner that multiplies our troubles, not divides them."

"The bill is simple," Coats said. "It gives federal money to child-care centers that measure up to federal regulations. It puts \$2.6 billion in the hands of bureaucrats and professional child-care providers. But it is a case study in the law of unintended consequences."

Coats said the ABC bill would benefit only a tiny minority of families, benefit middle-income families, and restrict supply and drive up costs of child-care services.

Proponents of a tax-credit approach contend it would target assistance to families most in need, allow regulations to be set at state and local levels and provide parents with maximum choice concerning child care. Proposals based on this approach vary on the question of whether to provide credits to all families with preschool-age children or only to families who purchase child-care services.

An example of this approach is President Bush's \$2.5 billion proposal, the Working Family Child Care Assistance Act. The plan would create a refundable tax credit of up to \$1,000 per child for all families with children under age 4. Families that also are eligible for the current dependent care tax credit would be able to choose between the two credits. The president's plan also calls for increasing annual funding for the Head Start program by \$250 million.

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"Some proposals advocate that our children march lock-step to an institution where Washington sets the rules," said Elizabeth Dole, secretary of labor. "But families have the basic responsibility for the care of their children. We must carefully support the role of the family in choosing the best care.

"The child-care needs of working Americans can best be met by providing assistance to parents, not to providers; through state and local regulations, not federal standards; through community-based and public-private partnerships, not federal bureaucracies; and by parental involvement, not federally mandated procedures."

But critics argue tax credits alone would do little to offset families' child-care expenses. In addition, critics say, such plans ignore the need for increasing the availability and quality of child-care services.

"I am not against the tax-credit approach," said Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn. "What I do oppose is the rhetoric which pretends it's any answer at all to America's child-care crisis. A tax credit would help to supplement the incomes of poor families with young children, period.

Dodd said he believes Congress must do more than "throw families a few hundred dollars in tax credits each year and let them fend for themselves."

"This is not like buying a toaster," Dodd said. "Parents are very, very confused. They are frustrated by a system in which demand has little relationship to quality or supply."

A third approach that has emerged recently would combine the other two approaches, thus providing states with federal grants and also giving tax breaks to families. Proponents of this approach say it would provide states with resources to improve child-care services without imposing federal standards, as well as helping individual families with the cost of child care.

Sens. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y., have introduced one of several proposals based on this approach. Their Expanded Child Care Opportunities Act of 1989 would increase the present child-care tax credit and make it refundable -- even through monthly paychecks -- for low-income and moderate-income families. It also would increase the Title XX social services block grant by \$400 million to help states improve child-care services.

This combination approach has gained the support of a variety of organizations, ranging from the National Governors' Association to the National Conference of State Legislatures to the National Child Care Association.

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Lewis tells missionaries  
to be mission-minded

By Joe Westbury

N-AMB

Baptist Press  
5/2/89

ATLANTA (BP)--Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, urged 116 newly commissioned missionaries to be ministry-minded as they seek to evangelize the nation's unchurched population.

Lewis, who spoke during the spring commissioning service at Union Baptist Church in Atlanta, told the home missionaries: "When we're doing the things God would have us do, people will come to us, follow us and want to know why we are doing those things. That's when we can share Jesus with them."

Lewis reminded the missionaries that 1.4 million individuals are added to the world's population each week, "each one doomed to a Christless eternity unless we are convinced we must feed them the spiritual food, the bread of life, which they hunger for."

Drawing a parallel between Jesus's feeding of the 5,000 because a boy offered his lunch of five loaves and five fishes, Lewis said God can work similar miracles today if Southern Baptists are willing to make similar sacrifices.

Linda Furr of Sledge, Miss., who will be serving with her husband Jimmy in Nashville, Tenn., shared how as a youth she believed she would one day serve as a missionary in Africa.

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After attending a World Missions Conference a few years ago she felt the call to home missions, Furr said. Now she will represent Southern Baptists as a missionary to the cults and people of various faiths.

"We need foreign missionaries in all the countries of the world, but we need to remember that the people of the world are also coming to the United States in great numbers, bringing their religions with them. We need missionaries who can reach them with the news of the true God who can transform their lives," she said.

Ken Ellis of Eustis, Fla., appointed as a mission pastor in Chicago, told how he was first introduced to the gospel through a group of athletes who were not ashamed of their faith. By attending meetings of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Ellis heard about Christ and became a Christian.

"Life has had its good days and its bad days. There have been many times when the days were so dark I was sure the sun would never shine again, but the Lord has stood by my side.

"Because of those experiences, my wife and I are prepared to share the dark days with others and can point them to a loving God," Ellis said, as he thanked Southern Baptists for making his ministry possible.

The 116 new missionaries will serve in the areas of black church extension, church and community ministries, evangelism, interfaith witness, language church extension, metropolitan missions, new church development, new church extension, new church starting, and rural-urban missions.

They will serve in 35 states and Canada.

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Missouri journalist to join  
foreign board's news staff

N-FMB

Baptist Press  
5/2/89

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Mary Speidel, coordinator of news services at William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., will become a staff writer in the news and information services department of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, June 12.

Speidel, 30, a native of Cape Girardeau, Mo., has worked at William Jewell since August 1986. Previously, she was a news writer in the public relations office at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1983-86, and an editorial assistant in the children's ministries department, Nazarene World Headquarters, 1981-82, both in Kansas City, Mo.

She earned a bachelor's degree in communications from Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau in 1981 and a master of divinity degree from Midwestern in 1986.

Speidel has done news and feature reporting based on volunteer trips to St. Lucia in the West Indies in 1985 and the Dominican Republic in 1988.

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Secretaries challenged  
to front-line ministry

N-SSB

Baptist Press  
5/2/89

NASHVILLE (BP) -- More than 700 participants in the National Conference for Southern Baptist Secretaries April 26-29 in Nashville were affirmed as "front lines of ministry" and bridges "from the staff to the church membership."

"The church secretary is a growth agent in local churches," said Joe Stacker, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church administration department, which sponsored the conference.

Being a secretary "is more than a job, it's a ministry. You are on the front lines of ministry for sharing the word of Jesus Christ."

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The role of secretaries is changing with developments in technology, Stacker said. For example, more than 6,100 churches now have computers, and by the year 2000 more than half of the 37,000 Southern Baptist churches will have some form of computer technology.

Betty Dilday, a speaker, conference leader and the wife of the president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, urged secretaries to embrace technological changes.

"Try to keep on the cutting edge of the many machines that are coming out every year. Continue to develop your skills," she said.

However, Dilday cautioned participants to remember that beyond technical aspects of the role, "a church secretary is a bridge from the staff to the church membership. You are an enabler. You can make things happen."

Speaking on the conference theme, "Catch the Wind," Gordon Kingsley, president of William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., said when Christians grasp the possibility of God's capacity to work miracles in and through them, life is never the same.

"We begin seeing ourselves as God's servants, God's ministers, God's doers," said Kingsley.

"We bring our little gifts to the Lord Christ. That's all we are asked to do. He blesses them and breaks them and feeds a hungry world," he said.

Marjorie Kelly, a former college administrator and wife of the executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, challenged the secretaries to soar to new heights in their Christian pilgrimage.

"When we reach higher ground in our Christian pilgrimage, we can see farther in God's great plan for us. You and I can soar best when we stoop low to help others soar," she added.

The National Association of Southern Baptist Secretaries elected Betty Walker of First Baptist Church of Burlington, N.C., as president. Other officers are: Karen White, First Baptist church of Coppell, Texas, vice president for membership; Tish Jones, Mount Vernon Baptist Association in Annandale, Va., vice president for publicity; and Becky Brown, First Baptist Church of Branson, Mo., secretary-treasurer.

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(BP) photo will be mailed separately to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press

Researcher compiles statistics  
with eye for 'signs from God'

By Art Toalston

F- FMB

Baptist Press  
5/2/89

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--He tells about the masses who have never heard the gospel, about millions who have been martyred since the time of Christ, about the billions that modern-day Christians spend on themselves.

His are not traditional Sunday morning sermons, however. David Barrett, an Anglican missionary whose career has focused on missions research, preaches with statistics and charts drawn from a computer database.

"Statistics are signs from God," Barrett likes to say, attributing the quotation to a modern-day Protestant monk in France.

But Barrett stands ready to amplify the point. Statistics help "make sense of the missions task," he says. They provide "a crucial part of our knowledge of the real world ... a concise way to get across stark facts, to pinpoint situations where the Christian response is obvious."

"Of course, Christians can say, 'I see what I've got to do, but I'm not going to do it.' A lot of people do that," he concedes.

Barrett, who hails from Great Britain, has been working with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board since 1985 fashioning facts into the World Evangelization Database.

Perhaps the most widely quoted statistic from the database is that 1.3 billion of the world's 5.2 billion people have never received a clear explanation of the Christian gospel. Many of these unreached people live in huge cities with few, if any, churches.

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Christians, meanwhile, spend \$130 billion a year on their own churches and activities and less than 1 percent of that amount to introduce the gospel to those who remain unevangelized year after year, according to Barrett.

In his latest project, Barrett is creating 30 "global diagrams" of key aspects of world evangelization in the past, present and future. They are being prepared in cooperation with 20 Christian researchers and missiologists from 12 countries.

One of the diagrams, for example, focuses on "global human need," outlining areas where Christian action can open up opportunities for communicating the gospel: poverty, corruption, human rights abuses, disease, addiction, warfare, pollution of the environment and natural disasters.

Another diagram involves Barrett's estimate of 40 million Christian martyrs since the time of Christ. By his definition, martyrs are believers in Christ "who lose their lives in a situation of witness as a result of human hostility."

Barrett hopes the diagrams ultimately will become available to concerned Christians through full-color copies, posters, computer disks and computer communication via telephone lines.

Beyond the World Evangelization Database and the global diagrams, Barrett's previous undertakings include his 1982 World Christian Encyclopedia, a 1,010-page country-by-country assessment of Christian strength that was 14 years in the making. Among other books he has written is a recent one that examined the decline of Christianity in cities worldwide.

Barrett also writes a yearly statistical update in the International Bulletin of Missionary Research.

Among the statistics he has highlighted are 119 million people killed by their own governments during the 20th century, compared to a death toll of 36 million combatants in war; an "ecclesiastical crime" estimate of \$760 million in church funds embezzled by 5 percent of the world's Christian workers each year; and the purchase of 45 million computers by Christian institutions and individuals since 1980.

Even within the church, statisticians have their critics, Barrett acknowledges. It is "unspiritual" to chart the progress of the faith, some critics argue, citing God's disapproval of King David's census. Another oft-heard argument is that human beings, not statistics, should be of greatest concern.

King David's pride, not the census, stirred God's anger, Barrett counters. Numerous censuses are reported in the Old Testament, the earliest being a list of nations in Genesis 10. Tallies related to Israel's preparedness for entering the promised land form the bulk of the Book of Numbers. And the numerical growth of the New Testament church often is noted in the Book of Acts.

"Every major denomination and agency in the Christian world keeps elaborate statistics," Barrett says. "Most use them minimally for planning. They ignore the wealth of information gathered at great expense by their own missionaries and pastors in the field."

In seeking to utilize these statistics, Barrett says: "We're producing maps. Not maps of geographical areas, but maps of all kinds of other features of the human condition" -- maps which point to peoples' needs and how they can best be reached with the gospel.

Also, Christians can employ statistics as "a valuable corrective to either excessive optimism or undue pessimism," Barrett says. "Ignorance cripples; knowledge liberates. Christians have nothing to fear from the truth, whether it is palatable or unpalatable, exhilarating or alarming."

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(BP) photo sent to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

Martyrdom: potent witness,  
missions researcher says

By Art Toalston

F-FMB

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Martyrdom remains a component of Christian faith in the last decades of the 20th century.

An average of 325,000 Christians have been killed for their faith each year over the last quarter century, missions researcher David Barrett estimates.

Since the time of Christ, Barrett adds, some 40 million Christians have been martyred.

"There's nothing unusual about this," he notes. "It's gone on for 20 centuries. It's simply a part of the life of the church."

Barrett's count of martyrs is but one part of his missions research that, in a cooperative venture with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, has resulted in the computer-era World Evangelization Database in Richmond, Va.

Barrett does not become defensive over skepticism of his seemingly astronomical martyrdom tally. It is not based solely on stories headlined in newspapers, but on numerous kinds of accounts, some of which surface years after the incidents, he says.

His definition of martyrdom also swells the count. Martyrs, he says, are believers in Christ who lose their lives in situations of witness as a result of human hostility.

In a strict biblical sense, martyrs are not necessarily people who would be considered unusually heroic or pious, Barrett says. The church knows the names of only 15,000 such heroic martyrs, he notes.

As to the rest, he says: "Nobody wrote their story down. Their names are lost." The memory of these martyrs is confined to overall death totals.

Martyrs may not realize they are in a situation of witness, Barrett says. Politics also may be a factor in some killings of Christians, especially in recent years in Latin America, the researcher says.

Christians are being martyred in about 50 countries, many of them countries where Christianity is not the majority religion, Barrett says. Lessened repression in the Soviet Union and China have caused a slight decline in the number of martyrs the past few years, he adds.

Martyrdom, as always, is a potent force for evangelization, Barrett states. Facing death, he notes, "demonstrates as nothing else can" a Christian's sincerity and commitment. It's a far more compelling witness than a sermon, a personal testimony or a one-on-one conversation urging a person to embrace Christianity.

Its potency lies in "the fact that martyrs don't face death as pagans do," Barrett says. "They've got a hope, and they say their hope is in Christ."

Among Christian professions, evangelists are statistically more likely to face martyrdom, Barrett says. Their preaching "excites the basic emotions -- the desire to follow Christ and the desire not to follow Christ."

Out of every 200 workers on the world's mission fields, one will experience martyrdom, Barrett estimates: "If we imagine that it's a nice place out there, and that everybody loves Christian missionaries, we're in for a shock. That isn't the case."

In recent years, Christians have been martyred in such countries as the Soviet Union, Vietnam, India, Ethiopia, Uganda, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, El Salvador and Iran, Barrett notes.

In Latin America alone, he estimates, 100,000 Christians have been martyred since 1970.

In Uganda, about one-fifth of the half million killings ordered by Idi Amin involved Christians in situations of witness, the researcher says.

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Barrett's estimate of Christians executed under Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin is 16 million. One of Stalin's infamous cables to a Ukrainian city read, "Eliminate 10,000 enemies of the people by Tuesday." Clergymen were at the top of the "enemies" list, Barrett says.

One of the harshest incidents of martyrdom occurred in Turkey from about 1890 to 1920, when Muslim soldiers killed 1 million Armenians, Barrett recounts. Soldiers went from village to village asking adults and children at bayonet point, "Muhammed or Christ?" The Christians responded with a phrase from their liturgy, "Christ, only Christ."

Still harsher were the killings recorded by Muslim conqueror Timur, or Tamerlane, during the 1300s. Among 35 million people put to death from China to Europe during his reign were 12 million members of the Catholic Apostolic Church of the East, also known as the Nestorian Church and now called the Assyrian Church.

Neither the United States nor England have been immune to episodes of Christian martyrdom, Barrett points out.

Christian Indians were massacred as America was being settled, and numerous black Pentecostals were lynched during the early 1900s, Barrett states. He adds that the late Martin Luther King Jr. is counted as a 20th-century martyr in the Chapel of the Martyrs in the Anglican Church's Canterbury Cathedral in England.

And during the 16th century reigns of Henry VIII and Queen Mary in England, about 2,300 clergymen and lay people were burned or hanged, Barrett says. Another 300 bishops and priests, along with numerous lay people, were killed during the subsequent reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

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See with 'inward eyes,'  
Walker tells seminarians

By Breena Kent Paine

Baptist Press  
5/2/89

N-CO  
(NOBTS)

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The most important part of seminary education should be the enlightenment of the minister's "inward eyes," Arthur Walker told students at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

"You may learn a lot of names and how to conjugate a lot of (Greek and Hebrew) verbs, ... but that is not as important as learning that the power of God is available to you to strengthen your ministry and to send you wherever he would have you to go," said Walker, executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Education Commission.

With "inward eyes," the minister should "see beyond the things that can even be tested or evaluated, (so) that your life will become fixed in the purpose and the ministry of God," added Walker, New Orleans graduate. "How can we lead others to understand how they should and can and ought to live unless we come to that perception ourselves?"

"It's time that the local church was speaking out and giving a new stamina, a new backbone, to our society so that we can stand against those morals and values which are eroding, and all of those influences which simply sweep away those standards of God and his word in today's society.

"If there is going to be anyone to speak to the morals and the values in our society, it's going to be individuals just like you and me, who have some understanding of God, whose (inward) eyes have been enlightened, who can see the defenses which God provides and can see the standards which God has demanded, and who can lead the community to an awareness of ... what they ought to be as God's people.

"The servant of God needs those inward eyes, for it is only with the inward eyes that we can truly discern what God has for us."

However, Walker warned against ministers who think they have reached the point of understanding all. "Knowledge cannot exist without growth and expansion," he explained. "This implies that no one of us can ever come to the place where we are the authority on God and his purpose and his word.

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"God is much more than any human mind can ever understand or interpret, and the one thing that an individual who acknowledges the expansiveness of God would realize is God can never be encompassed by (one's own) feeble understanding."

To gain inward eyes, "We must place emphasis on the spiritual heritage which reminds us of our acceptance by God in spite of our unworthiness," Walker said.

"God may not always be pleased with what I am in his service, but he accepts me and loves me and strengthens me. In his generosity, he continues to give me blessings far beyond (what) I deserve. And these two, his acceptance of me and his generosity, give a definition of the glory of his inheritance in my life: he will use me regardless."

Walker added: "Knowing my spiritual inheritance enables me to know who I am and what I reflect. Knowing my spiritual heritage, I'm challenged to be far more than I would ever attempt just on my own ability or achievement. Knowing my spiritual heritage helps me to see what God can accomplish even in a person like me.

"We ought to open our eyes and understand what God is doing, and live within his power. That power that brought Christ forth from the grave is available to every one of us.

"Never be defeated. Never be discouraged. Things may not go the way you want them to, and hurt and sorrow may come in great sweeps to your life, but the power of God is available to you to re-vivify, to re-strengthen, to re-make you ministry.

"God can and does work through you, and he depends on his people to carry his message."