



-- BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355
Alvin C. Shackelford, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Marv Knox, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 511 N. Akard, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 720-0550
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND (Foreign) Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

July 12, 1989

89-107

N-100

Plagiarism by Criswell
charged; he denies claim

By Ed Briggs

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A Dallas author alleges W.A. Criswell, patriarch of conservatism in the Southern Baptist Convention, plagiarized material in his popular book, "Why I Preach That The Bible Is Literally True."

Criswell has denied the charge.

Gordon James, a writer of theological books cited 15 examples of what he says are plagiarism, defined as "literary theft," or to "steal or pass off as one's own the ideas or words of another." James made his research available to the Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch, which published a front page article on the matter July 11.

James, who has written a book critical of Criswell's theology and the "Criswell Study Bible," claimed Criswell's "Why I Preach That The Bible Is Literally True," contains sections from Reuben Archer Torrey's "Difficulties and Alleged Errors and Contradictions in the Bible," published in 1907 by Fleming H. Revell Co.

The book was reprinted in paperback by Moody Press, the publishing arm of Moody Bible Institute in Chicago where Torrey, a Congregationalist evangelist, taught until his death in 1928. Torrey was a leading opponent of biblical liberalism, the view that Southern Baptist conservatives are fighting today.

James sent a list of examples, cited line by line and page by page, to Criswell's publisher, Broadman Press, a division of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, and asked that the book be withdrawn from distribution.

Dessel Aderholt, director of the Broadman division, wrote to James that if the book, first published in 1969, goes into another edition, "we would want to consult with the author and explore the possibility of making some editorial changes."

Broadman said it will not remove the book from distribution before the supply of fewer than 1,000 runs out. Aderholt added sales of the book "have reached a level at which the book would normally go out of print when the present stock is exhausted. That likely would be sometime in 1990."

The original hardcover edition of 43,000 copies sold out in 1983. Since then, more than 28,000 paperbacks of the book have been sold.

Criswell, 79, who said he has written about 50 books, is a former president of the 14.8-million-member SBC and a leader in the conservative faction. He said the book was written in longhand, something he rarely does, in 1969 when he was president of the convention.

The pastor of the 21,000 member congregation -- the largest affiliated with the SBC -- said, "I'm not conscious of lifting any thing out of anybody's volumes, published or anything else, unless I said 'so-and-so said so-and-so.'"

Aderholt, in his letter to James, said that while Criswell does not cite each reference to Torrey's book, he does refer to the scholar.

--more--

He added there is one other warning to the reader that the words of the book are not solely Criswell's.

"We find it significant that in his foreword, Dr. Criswell writes, 'The volume is my testimony, not a documented textbook on biblical theology. It is written with my words, with the words of others and with the words of God taken from the Holy Scriptures. ...,' " Aderholt wrote.

Criswell denied he borrowed phrases from Torrey's book without attribution, but said there was one way Torrey's words could have made it into the book. "Now what I did, of course, and I still do, is read a great deal and some of those things I'm sure could have stayed in my mind."

However, he said later he could not recall reading Torrey's book.

James told the Times-Dispatch he grew suspicious of Criswell in 1985 when he was doing research on his book on what he saw as inconsistencies in the theology of Criswell's preaching and in the "Criswell Study Bible."

In reading Criswell's book, James said, he got the sense he had read it in another book. He said he thumbed through some old books and "it wasn't long before I found it."

"I found one instance after another where Dr. Criswell literally stole the material from Torrey."

James said he was reluctant to do anything about it and put the matter aside until 1987, when he returned to the research and said he found even more inconsistencies.

Based on his research, James said he found material from the first, second, third, fifth, sixth, eighth, 10th, 15th, 16th and 18th chapters of Torrey's book included in the sixth and seventh chapters of Criswell's book, with some material in the fifth.

Three examples cited by James:

-- Torrey, page 27: "To one who is at all familiar with the history of critical attacks on the Bible, the confidence of those modern destructive critics who think they are going to annihilate the Bible at last, is simply amusing."

Criswell, page 46: "To one who is at all familiar with the history of critical attacks on the Bible, the confidence of the modern destructive critic who thinks he is going to annihilate this Gibraltar seems simply amusing."

-- Torrey, page 27: "Do not be frightened when you find a difficulty, no matter how unanswerable, or how insurmountable, it appears at first sight. Thousands of men have found just such difficulties before you were born."

Criswell, page 46: "We are not to be frightened when we find a difficulty, no matter how unanswerable or how insurmountable it first appears to be. Thousands of men saw these same difficulties before we were born."

-- Torrey, page 22: "It is one of the perfections of the Bible that it was not written in the terminology of modern science. If it had been, it would never have been understood until the present day ... Furthermore, as science and its terminology are constantly changing, the Bible, if written in the terminology of the science of to-day, would be out of date in a few years ... "

Criswell, page 49: "It is one of the perfections of the Bible that it was not written in the terminology of material science. If it had been, it would never have been understood, nor would it even be understood in the present day. Science and its terminology are constantly changing and if the Bible had been written in the terminology of science yesterday, it would be outmoded today and if it were written in the terminology of science today, it would be out of date a few years hence."

Criswell, in referring to James, said: "Whoever this guy is has some kind of an ax to grind. ... And, I repeat, I'm not conscious of having lifted anything out of anybody's book and writing that. I just wrote it longhand."

--more--

7/12/89

Asked if it were possible he had read Torrey's book over the years and his preaching, he said: "I do not read Torrey that much. ... And I have Torrey, but I'm not conscious of especially reading him at all."

(Briggs is religion writer for the Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch. The terminology changed to conform to Baptist Press style.)

--30--

By Linda Lawson

AIDS epidemic demands that churches minister

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--AIDS impacts every Southern Baptist congregation church leaders know it, participants in a medical symposium at Ridgecrest Conference Center were told July 10.

Bill Amos, a Florida pastor who wrote the 122-page book, "When AIDS he believes every Southern Baptist church includes at least one member (1) diagnosed with AIDS; (2) tested positive for the HIV virus and at risk unknowingly infected with the HIV virus; (4) at risk for AIDS due to drug use or blood transfusion; (5) family member of someone with AIDS.

"AIDS is not something we can go around," said Amos, noting 86,000 diagnosed in the United States. "We've got to go through it. Churches going to lead, follow or just hide on the AIDS issue.

"I am humbled to serve among people who take their Christian job with this issue," said Amos, pastor of First Baptist Church in Plant City, a class congregation in suburban Fort Lauderdale has dealt with four families two years.

The church sponsors a weekly support group for families of people about 40 members, and 15 to 25 attend each Tuesday.

"We feel this is the kind of evangelism that is the quiet cup

Churches which take seriously the challenge to minister to people families will have the opportunity to rediscover their mission and

"To pretend AIDS is an issue that doesn't belong to us is to imperative that is ours," said Amos.

He cited what he called one of the greatest tragedies being members of people with AIDS carrying deep and heavy burdens alone members would react.

"The deepest care of their lives they deal with in leprosy rejection from the people of God," said Amos.

He said Christians must learn the facts and allow the power to overcome their fear of AIDS. For example, he said, "I never visited a family that there is not physical touch involved. That is so important

Amos and Richard Goodgame, a Southern Baptist missionary in Africa, said that AIDS is a difficult disease to catch by means other than drug use or blood transfusion.

Goodgame said AIDS already is at epidemic proportions in Africa and are expected to be diagnosed every month for the next five years.

Noting differences between AIDS in the United States and Africa, factors in America, such as homosexuality, intravenous drug use are irrelevant in Uganda.

--more--

"As the epidemic progresses, anybody who has had sex with anyone else is at risk," he said.

Goodgame said it is controversial to counsel people with AIDS in Uganda, because most think talking about death hastens death.

"We have tried to counsel patients honestly and generally have had a positive response," he said. "We use the Bible and prayer almost every time when we talk with a patient."

However, Goodgame said the sheer numbers of people being diagnosed with AIDS makes counseling difficult.

"The number of people who need to hear the gospel in conjunction with good medical advice is enormous," he said. "We have had many patients who have received great encouragement and support from the Word of God."

Goodgame wrote "Medical Science and God's Word Give Answers to Questions Related to AIDS," a pamphlet being widely distributed in Uganda and other countries. He will be interviewed on a national teleconference, "AIDS: Crisis for Church and Family," to air Sunday, Oct. 8, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Central Daylight Time on the Baptist Telecommunication Network.

The medical symposium was sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home and Foreign Mission Boards and Wake Forest University Medical Center, in conjunction with "Jericho: A Southern Baptist Missions Festival."

FMB names David Coleman
interim development director

--30--
N-FMB

Baptist Press
7/12/89

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--David Coleman, a former missionary to Zimbabwe, has been named interim director of the development office at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va.

Previously, Coleman was an associate in the development office. Jerry Jackson, vice president for development, will leave the mission board July 31 to become president of Chowan College in Murfreesboro, N.C.

Coleman will plan, organize and direct the financial development program of the board. He will continue to work with donors who initiate contact with the board and help establish regional development councils of Southern Baptists interested in this type of support for foreign missions.

He also will continue to direct the board's LIFEowment and corporate giving programs, as well as its pooled income fund. These programs allow Southern Baptists to support foreign missions beyond the main channels of financial support.

Coleman, 46, and his wife, the former Linda Gholdston of Dayton, Tenn., were Southern Baptist missionaries to Zimbabwe from 1968 to 1986. Later, he was associate director in the volunteers in missions department at the board before moving to the development office in 1987.

A native of Cedar Hill, Tenn., Coleman grew up in Guthrie, Ky., and received the bachelor of science degree in business administration from Belmont College in Nashville, Tenn. He attended Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Before going to the mission field, he was pastor of churches in Tennessee and Missouri.

--30--

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

One sign of change in Hungary:
Baptist member of parliament

By Art Toalston

N-FMB

BUDAPEST, Hungary (BP)--Each day the Hungarian Parliament meets, Baptist minister Janos Viczian takes his rightful seat.

His presence in the legislative body is but one evidence of the political change that began evolving in Hungary long before President George Bush visited in July.

"I am not a politician," Viczian explained during a visit to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va., earlier this year. Viczian became a member of parliament when the Council of Free Churches of Hungary selected him as its president last year.

Eight positions for religious leaders, including the head of the Free Church council, were added to the parliament in 1984, Viczian said. The Roman Catholic Church gets three seats; the Reformed Church, two seats; Lutherans, Jews and the Free Church council each get one seat among some 370 in parliament.

Viczian also has been president of the Baptist Union of Hungary since 1984. Baptist work in Hungary dates back to the mid-1800s. Both sets of Viczian's grandparents were Baptists.

Forty years ago the Communist Party took control of the Hungarian government -- the same year the Free Church council was formed, Viczian said. Communist leaders often proclaimed the country's churches would die out within 25 years.

"We had many difficulties during the last 40 years," Viczian acknowledged. "We lost several hundred members," people who fell away from church attendance. But no evangelical, he claimed, was ever executed for spreading the gospel.

"The Word of God never lost the power," Viczian said. "Jesus Christ lives in Hungary. The church did not die out."

In fact, 52 new Baptist churches have been constructed during the past 25 years, he said. The small Baptist seminary in Budapest has continued operating, and is moving to new quarters. The seminary will house the new International Baptist Lay Academy, which will begin offering training to Baptist congregational leaders throughout Eastern Europe next summer. Two Southern Baptist representatives have been assigned to Hungary to assist the academy.

Currently 260 Baptist churches and 140 "preaching points," involving some 20,000 worshipers, exist in this country of 10.6 million people, Viczian said.

Public preaching, while legal, runs counter to Hungarian cultural norms, Viczian said. The public likens street-corner preachers and choirs to drunkards or circus members, he said.

Fellow members of parliament, Viczian said, are polite and respectful to him as a minister. In "corridor talk," they sometimes ask him questions about the Bible, such as how Jonah survived three days in a fish, or they make faith-related observations. One member, noting that 100,000 Hungarian young adults have become alcoholics, told Viczian that such societal ills could have been lessened "if we did not leave the Bible as a real social ethic and if we did not forget the Ten Commandments."