



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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September 15, 1989

89-133

CLC trustees elect Smith
during 'quiet, calm' meeting

By Louis Moore

N-C JC

NASHVILLE (BP)--In their annual meeting, trustees of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission unanimously elected James A. Smith as the organization's first full-time staff member based in the nation's capital.

Smith, 24, was elected assistant director of the CLC's Washington office, effective Oct. 1. He will work with members of Congress and other government leaders on legislation and other matters relating to the CLC's program assignment.

Prior to joining the CLC, Smith was director of research and communications for the U.S. House of Representatives Republican Study Committee. He is a 1987 political science graduate of Dallas Baptist University and was president of the school's Student Government Association and founder and chair of its chapter of Students for America.

Chairperson Joe Atchison of Rogers, Ark., called the Sept. 12-13 board meeting, which ended a day earlier than scheduled, "the quietest, calmest and most productive and constructive session in many years."

The commission has been involved in controversy since 1986, when former Executive Director Foy Valentine announced he was stepping down from the post. Conservative trustees complained that moderates tried to "fix" the selection of Valentine's successor and opposed the nomination of N. Larry Baker, who was elected 16-13 in January 1987.

A year later, Baker survived a 15-15 vote to fire him but resigned in the summer of 1988. Current Executive Director Richard D. Land was elected the following September on a 23-2 vote.

Land told trustees in their latest meeting the commission's recent financial difficulties have been resolved through "prudent management and wise stewardship of resources." Prior to Land's election, the agency was more than \$80,000 in the red.

The commission will end the current fiscal year Sept. 30 with all bills paid and about \$60,000 restored to its operating reserve, Land said.

A trustee committee, meanwhile, approved printing a new commission pamphlet on abortion and set the wheels in motion for final completion of a new four-part pamphlet series on AIDS.

The abortion pamphlet was written by Southern Baptist Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis and edited by CLC staff. CLC trustees approved that pamphlet with few changes, all approved by Lewis.

Trustees and CLC staff members spent more than three hours in committee meetings editing the AIDS series line by line. The majority of the changes focused on technical terminology used by the writers. Trustees such as Alma Ruth Morgan of Bartlesville, Okla., said they wanted the pamphlet to contain words "people in the pew will understand."

Publication of the abortion and AIDS pamphlets are expected by November.

In other action, trustees:

-- Voted unanimously to name Richard Goodgame, a physician and Southern Baptist medical missionary to Uganda, as recipient of the commission's 1990 Distinguished Service Award.

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Goodgame is considered an expert on AIDS. He is a graduate of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, earned a doctor of medicine degree from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Before making the decision on Goodgame, trustees sought assurances, which they received from family and colleagues, that he is pro-life in his beliefs and practices.

-- Approved a 1989-90 budget of \$1,028,508, up \$11,358 over the 1988-89 budget.

-- Recommended asking the Southern Baptist Executive Committee to increase the CLC's Cooperative Program unified budget allocation by \$310,850 during fiscal 1990-91. The requested allocation is \$1,208,358, up from \$897,508.

The increase is earmarked to allow the commission to continue its work in promotion of hunger concerns, expand its Washington office, add a new person in the area of marriage and family life, increase the number of issues of its regular publication called Light and start a new ethics television program on the ACTS network.

-- Decided to give Land a "salary adjustment package" of \$10,000. The adjustment would increase his annual salary and benefits from the current \$70,971.85 to \$80,971.85.

Trustee Coy Privette of Raleigh, N.C., asked why Land was getting a raise of about 14 percent when staff members' raises for the year were only about 5 percent.

Rudolph C. Yakym Jr. of Mishawaka, Ind., responded that Land was hired when the commission had a deficit and the CLC was "in general chaos and turmoil" and that the search committee could not offer him a package "commensurate with other (Southern Baptist) agency heads, his ability and his education." Even with the raise, Land still would be the third-lowest-paid Southern Baptist executive, he said.

Morgan noted the CLC gave Land his original salary because the commission was "trying to set a new precedent for agency heads."

Atchison affirmed both arguments but added that the search committee "wanted to consider a raise when they could, because of the salary cut he took to come."

James Paul Wood of Atlanta noted the increase is an adjustment intended to correct a base salary that was started too low. "From here on we would anticipate more consistent raises across the board," he said.

-- Provided a "relocation reimbursement" to help ease the financial strain on new employees who move to Nashville and must lease their houses where they formerly lived at a loss because the homes cannot be sold at fair value.

-- Voted to release publicly the salary and benefits of the executive director but to release only a total of all money spent for other staff positions, along with the number of positions.

-- Approved changes in the commission's salary review policy and retirement plan.

The salary review policy will base annual increases on cost of living, merit and service to the commission. The retirement policy allows annuity contributions to be partially vested on an employee's behalf beginning with the first year of work.

-- Approved location and topic for the CLC annual seminar in 1991, to be in Fort Worth, Texas, March 25-27, with a theme of "Stewardship and the Environment: The Biblical Path Between Idolatry and Irresponsibility." Commissioners cautioned the staff not to include components of the meeting that might be interpreted as condoning New Age religion.

-- Approved sponsorship of a race relations conference, a consultation on drunk driving and a retreat with seminary ethics professors.

-- Gave the CLC staff a standing ovation for work accomplished during the previous year.

Proposed pastors' meet
draws concern in Texas

By Toby Druin

N. L. L. L.

DALLAS (BP)--The Texas Baptist executive board has asked its officers to express concern to a group of Texas Baptist pastors about a proposed "pastors' conference" scheduled on the eve of the annual meeting of the state convention, scheduled Nov. 7-8 in Lubbock.

The proposed pastors' conference conflicts with the annual meeting times of Texas Baptist Men and Woman's Missionary Union, just prior to the state convention. In Texas, the time prior to the annual meeting traditionally has been given over to the missions emphases of TBM and WMU.

Chairman C.W. Bess, pastor of First Baptist Church, Lewisville, who said he feared "for the spirit of the fellowship," and Vice Chairman Leroy Patterson, pastor of Memorial Baptist Church, Houston, were expected to share the "consensus of concern" of the board with Rick Scarborough, pastor of Retta Baptist Church, Burleson, who recently released plans for the conference.

In a news release to Dallas-Fort Worth media, Scarborough said the conference, had been organized by a "group of pastors" and will be held in the Lubbock Municipal Auditorium, Nov. 6 at 1:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

The release listed speakers as Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas; Ralph Smith, pastor of Hyde Park Baptist Church, Austin; James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless; Stan Coffey, pastor of San Jacinto Baptist Church, Amarillo; John D. Morgan, pastor of Sagemont Baptist Church, Houston; and Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala.

Texas Baptist Men and Woman's Missionary Union traditionally have met on the day prior to the opening of the annual convention and in recent years have altered their format to accommodate the Tuesday afternoon opening of the convention.

This year, both the TBM and WMU conventions begin Monday afternoon Nov. 6 and continue through noon Tuesday. The Baptist General Convention of Texas convenes at 1:40 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 7.

At the Sept. 12 executive board meeting in Dallas, Ed B. Bowles, pastor of Gaston Avenue Baptist Church, Dallas, although not a board member, noted that in years past steps had been taken to "protect" the pre-convention days for the men's and women's meetings.

Bowles asked if the state convention leaders concurred with the scheduling of Scarborough's conference and inquired about the policy regarding pre-convention meetings.

Executive Director William M. Pinson Jr. said no stated policy exists. "There is no Baptist pope to check with," he said.

But Pinson noted there has been a "family understanding" that the time before the annual meeting is for missions as emphasized by TBM and WMU. He added there may be a need to have a study regarding the time period before the convention.

The proposed conference "is a matter for prayer," Chairman Bess said. "Some of us have worried about the spirit of the fellowship" if the conference is held.

Scarborough told the Baptist Standard, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas he and several others, including Coffey, had discussed the idea of a conference for several months and Coffee had helped put together the agenda.

The conference was not discussed, as has been reported, he said, at the meeting of the "Young Conservatives," at First Church of Euless prior to the June meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Las Vegas.

"We talked about it before then (June)," Scarborough said. "But that spurred it on some, the interest those fellows showed and the idea of trying something of this sort."

Scarborough, a former vocational evangelist, said he is aware of criticism that the proposed Texas pastor's conference is of a political nature, but added, "In the environment we are in that is unavoidable."

BGCT President Joel Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Worth, said the BGCT is not a "connectional body" and has no authority, by historic polity, "to tell any group of brothers or sisters when or where they could meet and not meet."

He said he feels, however, it was unfortunate Scarborough's conference had been scheduled at a competitive time and had expressed his concern to Scarborough.

"We need to do all we can not to exacerbate the situation," he said, "to endeavor to keep the unity of spirit in the bond of peace."

Later in his remarks to the board in his role as president, he said that lest he be perceived as dodging the issue he wanted to note, "We have a 10-year long laboratory in our national denomination that confrontation leads to escalation, and we need to be concerned that everyone have the perception of inclusion and not exclusion from the life of our state denomination."

TBM President Wilton Davis of Dallas and TBM Executive Director Bob Dixon said they had met with Scarborough and offered the pastors time on the TBM program, which they said had been altered to emphasize prayer for spiritual awakening. They also suggested the pastors meet on Thursday.

Davis and Dixon said they are leaving the matter "in the hands of the Lord." Davis, however, commented that pastors scheduling a meeting during the time of the TBM sessions "sends a message to laymen that they don't care what the laymen are doing."

Bennie Slack, pastor of First Baptist Church, Gainesville, at first moved that Executive board officers speak to Scarborough about the board's hesitancy regarding the pastors' conference but withdrew his motion when it was suggested action of the board would only escalate the issue.

Instead, Bess and Patterson simply will relay the board's consensus of concern.

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Godsey nominates conservatives
for Mercer trustees vacancy

By Audrey Post

Baptist Press
9/15/89

ATLANTA (BP)--Mercer University's president has nominated three conservative Baptist ministers to fill one of Mercer's trustee slots, apparently a conciliatory gesture to the conservative-dominated Georgia Baptist Convention.

The names of two of the nominees Nelson Price of Marietta and Jerry Mahan of Cedartown were announced Sept. 12 at a GBC executive committee meeting in Atlanta. The third nominee is George Barnett of Marietta, according to Eugene Tyre, and executive committee member and co-chairman of the special GBC panel studying Mercer's financial problems.

"One of those three will be chosen," Tyre said.

Mercer and the selection of trustees for the Baptist-affiliated university was the main topic at the meeting. The Mercer Study Committee, which Tyre co-chaired with GBC President Dwight (Ike) Reighard, presented its report calling for the formation of a 92-member GBC advisory board for Mercer.

Mercer President R. Kirby Godsey told the crowd of about 200 people attending the meeting that the trustees' executive committee has agreed to pursue the idea of an advisory board. First however, the GBC must approve the idea at its November convention, and the board of trustees must endorse it at its December meeting.

Reighard and Tyre said the earliest such an advisory board could be in operation would be late summer of early fall 1990.

"The board of visitors will provide an excellent forum for the discussion of issues of concern to Georgia Baptists," Tyre said. "But I would also like very much for the Georgia Baptist Convention to have stronger input into the selection of trustees."

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The GBC selects each trustee from a list of three submitted. Nine nominees for three seats are chosen by the alumni, the rest by a trustee committee based on recommendations from the university president.

In its preliminary report earlier this year, the GBC's Mercer Study Committee asked that the trustee selection process be changed so one-third are nominated by the trustees, one-third by the alumni and one-third by the GBC.

A trustee group that met with the committee rejected the proposal which would involve changing Mercer's charter.

The final report presented Sept. 1 noted the board of trustees' refusal to change the trustee selection process and urged the trustees to nominate "persons who are representative of our entire Baptist constituency."

Two years ago, the Baptist constituency was divided at the state convention over the issue of Mercer and its leadership. The so-called "Baptist showdown" began in October of that year with conservative layman Lee Roberts' mass-mail campaign detailing allegations of heresy and immorality on the Mercer campus.

Roberts, a Marietta businessman, was the most visible leader in an effort by Baptist conservatives to gain more control over the way Mercer's trustees are chosen.

At the convention, the perceived threat to Mercer by Roberts' campaign swelled the ranks of moderate messengers from which the university draws its strongest supporters who claimed he had defended Mercer's academic freedom.

However, when Mercer's financial woes -- about \$20 million in hidden deficits and almost \$8 million in undisclosed short-term loans -- came to light in December, Godsey's leadership once again became an issue.

The report presented Sept. 12, and accepted by the GBC executive committee acknowledged that "many Georgia Baptists continue to question whether or not the present administration can lead Mercer out of this financial crisis."

However, no call was made for the resignation of Godsey, and no mention was made of escrowing GBC's contributions to Mercer -- two options that had been discussed earlier this year.

After the meeting, Reighard said that escrowing the estimated \$3 million Mercer receives from Georgia Baptist sources "was never an option the committee as a whole looked at. There was one wild-eyed fanatic -- me."

"But we have never in my own church taken Mercer out of the budget," he continued. "Some of us felt for a while we (Georgia Baptists) were being totally ignored in the process."

Reighard said he believes a GBC Board of Visitors might help Baptists feel their concerns are being relayed.

He mentioned a comment made by David Hudson, chairman of Mercer's trustee executive committee, that the only people whose opinion matter regarding Mercer's leadership are the trustees.

"That's a very arrogant statement," Reighard said. "I thought that statement drove it home pretty clearly."

Although Tyre and GBC executive committee chairman John Butler said they hope the convention will continue to push for direct nomination of trustees, they acknowledge it isn't likely to happen soon. Reighard was more blunt.

"There's not a snowball's chance in Jamaica," he said.

Tyre said the committee did not seek to reach a consensus on the question of Godsey's continued leadership, but he noted the "no confidence" votes of faculty and student groups and the resignations of two trustees -- both of whom cited the board's continued backing of Godsey.

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Reighard, who has called for both escrowing the money and firing Godsey, said he personally was disappointed the committee did not take a stronger stand.

"Morris the Cat can take lessons from Dr. Godsey," he said, laughing. "He obviously has more than nine lives."

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Post is a reporter for the Macon Telegraph and News.

Vestal stresses basic themes of
Christianity in Southwestern revival By Chip Alford

N-SWRBS

Baptist Press
9/15/89

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--As a new decade approaches, believers have no greater need than to rediscover essential, basic Christianity, according to the speaker at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's annual fall revival in Fort Worth, Texas.

"One reason we have such little impact on our world is because we are too much like our world," said Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in Suburban Atlanta. "But if we will discover what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, a follower of Jesus Christ, then something will happen within us and within the church that will impact this secular, humanistic world."

Seminary President Russell Dilday said students and faculty truly were experiencing a renewal.

"You can't really define in exact terminology what happens when revival is experienced in an individual heart and life, in a congregation, or in a family of faith like the seminary, but we know it when it happens, and it's happening here," Dilday said. "That spirit and that newness of commitment is beginning to express itself in remarkable ways across this campus. (Students) have expressed that to me. It's happening in the classrooms, and it's happening in individual lives."

Vestal told the seminary family that essential, basic Christianity involves a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, concern for the eternal spiritual welfare of non-Christians, and a renewing change of heart.

"In order to become a disciple of Jesus Christ, you must go beyond the external observance of religious rituals and religious rules, and you must let God deal with your heart," Vestal said. "You've not only got to be willing to turn from the sins that you commit, the individual acts of sin, but you must be willing for God to change the desires of your heart so that you don't want to do those sins anymore."

Vestal also preached a message about discouragement, which he described as, "the greatest battle that you will fight in your ministry."

"When you get discouraged, you're not much good to anybody if you stay there," he said. "You go through the motions, but your heart's not there."

People get discouraged because they look at circumstances, problems and people from a "human, frail, sinful vantage point," he said. For a change of perspective, believers need to "go to the sanctuary" to worship God and discover his goodness, he added.

Vestal also talked about the most important weapons Christians have against spiritual warfare -- the word of God and prayer. He encouraged students to find a "tent of meeting" like Moses had to meet God face to face, learn his ways and experience his glory.

"You'll be no better in your ministry than you are in your prayer life," he said.

Vestal said he was impressed by the commitment he sensed from seminary students noting, "I have a real feeling that God is stirring in the hearts and minds of these students in a way that is going to have some lasting impact," he said.

Doug Falknor, a theology student from Huntsville, Texas, said he was moved not only by the revival messages, but by the potential he saw in the students attending.

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"Close to the beginning of one of the services I was looking over the balcony and seeing all the students, men and women, singing and worshipping God," he said. "It really made me realize the impact that these people are going to have on the nation and on the world. I think I had been seeing (the revival) more from a self-centered position before that, but when I could see the vision that God has for his people here, my perspective changed."

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Vestal optimistic about future
of Southern Baptist Convention

By Scott Collins

SWBTS

Baptist Press
9/15/89

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Reconciliation within the fractured Southern Baptist Convention is still possible, according to a 1988 candidate for the SBC presidency.

Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta and the moderate candidate for the SBC presidency last June, expressed his optimism during a visit to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Vestal was on the seminary campus Sept. 12-15 speaking at the school's annual revival meeting.

Vestal's belief that reconciliation still is possible in the 14.8-million-member SBC will guide his decision regarding another attempt at the SBC presidency when the convention meets in New Orleans in June, he said: "I'm still very much concerned about the convention, and I have not given up on reconciliation, and whatever I do in terms of the future is with the aim of real reconciliation.

"I really want a reconciliation in this denomination. Whatever I do in terms of my personal involvement in the denomination, I'm going to work for that. That's going to be my goal."

While Vestal has been visible on the SBC political front for the past year, he said he attempted to avoid those issues during the revival at Southwestern.

"I'm not naive to the reality of the controversy in the convention and to real conflict," Vestal said. "But I've tried to preach this week about the biblical truths that transcend all controversy and conflict and that fortify you for life, for ministry."

His sermons during the week focused on eternal truths, "that which is true now, that which is true yesterday and is going to be true tomorrow," he said. "I tried to focus on that which is eternally true because I believe that if these seminary students will do that, God's going to guide them through controversy.

"God's going to use them to resolve (the SBC) controversy but even more than that, God's going to use them in this world."

Vestal, who grew up in Fort Worth and received two degrees from Southwestern, said the revival at the seminary was a "spiritual renewing time for me personally. I have sensed on this campus a great hunger and yearning for the things of God.

"I sense an openness to the messages, an openness to commitment, and I have a real feeling that God is stirring in the hearts and minds of these students in a way that is going to have some lasting impact."

That impact, Vestal said, will be felt throughout the SBC. The seminary students encountered are "serious-minded and they are thoughtful. They are intense. I have not sensed a frivolity or superficiality but a real intensity.

"I have great hope for the future of this denomination, and part of that hope is conveyed in a deeper walk with God, a greater passion for the lost and a greater commitment to Christ as Lord."

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Southeastern hires
Brock as PR director

SEBTS

Baptist Press
9/15/89

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Paul T. Brock has been named director of public relations/communication at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C..

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Brock, director of public relations for Colorado Christian University in Denver, replaces Rodney V. Byard, who resigned in 1988.

Brock is a native of Memphis, Tenn., and a graduate of Union University in Jackson, Tenn. and of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

He has worked for Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, 1979-1982, and Foreign Mission Board, 1982-1985.

He was director of public relations for Colorado Baptist University in Denver from 1986 to 1989, when the school was merged with Colorado Christian College.

Brock began his new position with Southeastern Sept. 5

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BP CLARIFICATION

Baptist Press
9/15/89

To clarify the content of the statement adopted by the special called session of the Florida Baptist Convention, please replace the fourth paragraph of "Florida Baptists adopt abortion statement, strategy," sent 9/12/89 with the following three paragraphs:

The statement is targeted at state legislators, who will gather in Tallahassee Oct. 10-13 at Martinez's request to consider more restrictive abortion laws. The statement denounces the "casual attitudes about abortion" contained in current laws. It does not take a specific stand on Martinez's proposals, but insists "the right of human life must be protected by the state."

In order to minimize divisiveness, Florida leaders said, the statement does not deal with which, if any, exceptions to abortion are morally permissible. It acknowledges the reality and right of disagreement among Baptists on abortion, then adds: "Nevertheless, we are far more united in our agreement that legal change is needed than we are divided about some of the difficult circumstances about which disagreement exists."

After adopting the statement Friday night, 1,092 messengers and visitors spent Saturday morning in workshops learning how to influence state legislators.

Thanks, BP

NOTE TO EDITORS: For those who wish to use it, we also are sending the text of the recommendation adopted by the Florida Baptist Convention.

RECOMMENDATION ON THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE
Florida Baptist State Convention

The Florida Baptist State Convention consists of 2,057 congregations with more than 1 million members.

We are a diverse people in almost every way: theologically, socially, ethically, geographically, politically, and economically.

We are an independent people. We are a nonhierarchical convention. Soul freedom and liberty of conscience are among our most cherished beliefs. As a result, no individual or group can ever presume to speak for all Southern Baptists in Florida.

At the same time, Florida Baptists are greatly troubled by the casual attitudes about abortion reflected in the current state of abortion law. Florida Baptists have consistently and forcefully expressed opposition to abortion on demand.

While these prior statements and actions are not binding on the conscience or practice of any Southern Baptist member of church in Florida, they do express who we are as a people.

We have had our differences about some of the circumstances in which abortion might be justified. Disagreements about the morality or immorality of abortions in such cases as rape or incest have been real.

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Nevertheless, Florida Baptists are far more united in our agreement that legal change is needed than we are divided about some of the difficult circumstances about which disagreement exists. Those areas of disagreement represent a minute percentage of the 1.5 million abortions performed annually nationwide.

We believe human life to be sacred and that it begins at conception. Among the many threats to the preservation and development of human life, abortion has become a major threat. The right of human life must be protected by the state. Thus, we call upon Florida Baptists to support legislation that will achieve the dramatic saving and nurturing of human life.

In order to implement our commitment to the sanctity of human life, we direct the Committee on Nominations to recommend to the Florida Baptist State Convention, November 13-15, 1989, an ad hoc committee of 15 persons that will plan, with the administrative staff of the Florida Baptist Convention and the Florida Baptist Family Ministries, strategies that will follow through on this moral concern, i.e.: educational materials on Christian sexuality, crisis pregnancy centers, additional homes for unwed mothers, adoption, foster care, and other related ministries.

Thanks, BP

Don't be 'blind-sided,'
Drummond tells Southeastern

Baptist Press
9/15/89

N-SEBTS

WAKE FOREST (BP)--"Be careful about being blind-sided," Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Lewis Drummond warned students and faculty during the Wake Forest, N.C., school's 39th opening convocation.

He reminded them of the Apostle Paul's passage in the book of Philippians, that Christians need to "press on to the high calling of the goals of the prize in the upper call of God in Christ Jesus."

Southeastern students and faculty need to "forget" some things if they are going to be able to focus on their upward call, he said. "It's just a good idea to be able to sort out what can be changed and ought to be changed and therefore you give yourself utterly and completely to that. But what can't be changed, commit to the grace of God and forget that which is behind.

"Forget ourselves, lose ourselves, immerse ourselves in service and commitment to Jesus Christ. Only then do we really become a real self in the rich, deep sense that God intends for us to experience." Do not get caught up in past victories or defeats, he said, noting either could allow Christians to be blind-sided and cause them to miss the prize.

"He (Christ) is our goal -- not his work, not our ministry, not all those things we do as important, as vital, as central as they are," Drummond said. "He himself is our goal therefore upon him, him alone, do we fix our gaze in fascination, for he is fascinating: In wonder, for he is a wonder; and in absolute love and adoration, for he is that."

That concept must be reflected in three areas, he added: "Walk circumspectly, the Bible says. Know where you're going. Keep your eye on the goal. Watch each step."

Second, a correct Christian walk result in witnessing for Christ. "It is eternally wise to win souls," he explained. "If that sounds too pious or too sentimental, friend, you need to walk more circumspectly. Because a walk with Jesus Christ results in a life of witness for Jesus Christ."

Third, following Christ commands results in victory, he concluded: "When you press towards the goal, when you strain forward to that which is ahead ... you win. Isn't it going to be grand when our Lord himself plucks from the bank of the celestial stream two or three strands of laurel, plait them together, circles them, binds them up in his cord of love, places it on our brow and says, 'Well done good and faithful servant.'"

Life is not an endless track, and a consummation time is coming, when the prize will be given to the victors, Drummond promised. "It's all yours in Christ Jesus. Don't let life blind-side you. Keep your eye, look in the right direction, keep your eyes on him."

'Show must go on,'
hurt volunteer says

By Eric Miller *N-AMB*

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (BP)--Southern Baptist mission volunteer Jim Moore has been put back together with screws, plates, casts, stitches and prayer.

The van he was driving the night of Aug. 13 in Malawi ran into an ox cart. He suffered a fractured skull, arm, wrist, leg and foot. A passenger in the cart was killed.

Moore, 31, of Elko, Nev., is a geologist. He arrived in Malawi in May to spend a year providing technical assistance and direction of a well-drilling and irrigation project that could result in clean water for 3,000 people in seven villages.

"I'm not out of the picture yet," he said in a telephone interview from Johannesburg, South Africa. "The show must go on." He said he planned to return to the project by late September.

The accident occurred as he drove home from a project meeting with government officials and villagers. The lights of an oncoming vehicle blinded him and he failed to see the ox cart, which he hit, causing the van to cave in on him.

Moore, not fully conscious after the wreck, was trapped inside the van and was bleeding badly. Rescuers believed he already was dead, but they cut away metal to remove him from the wreckage and took him to a clinic. The seat belt and shoulder harness he was wearing probably saved his life, Moore said. Two villagers riding in the van with him sustained no injuries.

A village church congregation prayed through the night for Moore.

Officials with the American Embassy and Malawi government helped transfer Moore from Malawi to a Johannesburg hospital where he could get specialized care. Moore was scheduled for sinus surgery Sept. 12. An indentation from the skull fracture will require cosmetic surgery later on.

The water project, on hold until Moore returns, will provide 10 wells for drinking water and crop irrigation. Just before the accident occurred, government officials had approved the project and villagers had agreed to provide labor, along with sand, stone and bricks for wells. Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board funds will pay for hand pumps and pipes.

The Chikwawa District, where the project is located, has dry seasons during which crops will not grow without irrigation, Moore said. Villagers lack drinking water, suffer from vitamin deficiencies and get infections because of shortages of bathing water.

While waiting to get back to the project, Moore's attitude has been "excellent," said Sandy Cordes, a close friend from Elko who calls him regularly. Moore, single, has worked for oil and mining companies as a geologist. He had wondered how he could use his skills for the Lord and was pleased when he learned of the Malawi project position, Cordes said.

Moore, who suffered headaches for two weeks after the wreck, said he may someday seek a career in missions.

As for attitude, "I've been up and down -- generally up -- wondering why and what the Lord has in this," said Moore, who has screws and plates in an arm and a leg. "There's a purpose, and something good will come out of this in my life and the project and the people it affects.

"God wants us to have faith in him more than anything, and he's in control no matter what happens," the volunteer said. "He uses everything to his good and purpose and he teaches us through it. I'm just following him."

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Restore the biblical role
of laity, task force urged

By Mark Wingfield *N-AMB*

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Churches have "pooped pastors and passive pews" because they have distorted the roles of laity and clergy, a marketplace evangelism expert said.

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Pete Hammond, director of marketplace evangelism for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, spoke to a Southern Baptist task force studying evangelism in the workplace. The marketplace evangelism task force, which has met three times this year at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, is coordinated by the lay evangelism department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Because of this clergy-laity distortion, "pastors are now addicted to power and congregations are addicted to passivity," he explained. "That's why we have pooped pastors and passive pews."

Hammond called on pastors to "close the gap between the world of the Bible and the world of real people," noting that the Bible is a book about lay ministers rather than about professional clergy.

"We have successfully convinced the pew sitters that 90 percent of the people in the Bible work for the Home Mission Board or the Foreign Mission Board as full-time, paid religious professionals," Hammond said. "That is a lie."

Hammond said his own study of Bible characters revealed that:

-- 75 percent of the major characters of the Bible never held a religious job. Most held common jobs in areas such as construction, agriculture and household service.

-- 25 percent had criminal records.

-- 25 percent were aliens, immigrants and refugees.

"Do the people in our pews find themselves in the Bible because of our preaching?" Hammond asked pastors in the group. "Our people need this connection. God wants to display his power through nobodies, but we have tricked the kingdom into believing God wants to work only through somebodies."

Hammond urged pastors to rediscover the Bible as a book full of working people. "We need to knock the Bible saints off their pedestals and put them in work clothes our people can identify with," he said.

Darrell Robinson, new vice president of the HMB's evangelism section, echoed this thought. "Baptists at one time realized there was no distinction between clergy and laity. We've short-circuited that in recent times."

The pastor's role is to understand Scripture and lead the congregation to interpret it in light of their marketplaces, Hammond said.

As an example of how to accomplish this, Hammond said he will not preach in any church now without allowing for a response by a lay person immediately after his message.

Hammond and Robinson said a better understanding of the role of laity in ministry would change the church's evangelism practices.

"We are operating with a view of evangelism that our primary responsibility is to hire a few verbal Rambos who are to gun the world down with the gospel," Hammond said. "We exalt one form of evangelism as the only form of evangelism."

That one technique will not be successful in the marketplace, he said. "We live in a culture of lonely, hurting people whose desperate need is not an ideology but a relationship."

Robinson added: "Evangelism is not simply a program we design. It is the natural expression of a Christ-filled body."

"We have the team in place to reach America for Christ. But that mighty army needs to be awakened."

The task force is developing a denomination-wide emphasis on marketplace evangelism that will be launched in three-year pilot projects beginning in Boston in 1990 and Los Angeles in 1991.

'Marketplace evangelism' defines
movement underway, observers say

By Mark Wingfield

N-NMB

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--In South Carolina, a businessman and friend invite an associate to lunch one day not to talk about business, but to share their Christian testimony.

In another state, an auto mechanic looks beyond the cars he works on to see their owners, people he plants seeds of the gospel with as he changes oil and aligns wheels.

In Georgia, a woman takes neighborhood children into her home after school until their parents come home from work. She bakes cookies for them and reads them Bible stories.

None of these Southern Baptist laypeople considered themselves ministers. In fact, all three were shocked when introduced to the concept of "marketplace evangelism" by members of Southern Baptists' marketplace evangelism task force.

The task force, coordinated by the Home Mission Board's lay evangelism department, is developing a denomination-wide emphasis on marketplace evangelism that will be launched in three-year pilot projects in Boston in 1990 and Los Angeles in 1991.

Simply defined, marketplace evangelism is "what we do every day when we're not involved in formal church activities," says Ruth Lackey. She and her husband, Herman, are members of First Baptist Church in Midwest City, Okla., and serve on the task force.

"There are lots of people who are active in marketplace evangelism and have no idea that they are," says Jim Pierce, a layman from Metropolitan Baptist Church in Cambridge, Mass. Pierce and his wife, Eunice, are also task force members.

"Marketplace evangelism is very much a part of Scripture," Pierce notes. "The whole Bible indicates that the Hebrew religion and the Christian religion were carried by ordinary people in the places where they worked.

"We have secularized our jobs and separated them from our faith. That is heresy.

"Our Christianity, if it is genuine, has to affect our world. We have a responsibility as Christians to share Christ with people whose lives we touch in our workplace," he says.

The goal of the task force is to promote marketplace evangelism by encouraging laypeople to be bold witnesses and by reminding those already practicing it that they are ministers, according to Ira Craft. Craft and his wife, Betty, are task force members from First Baptist Church of Columbia, S.C. He is also a member of the SBC Executive Committee.

"My prayer is that from this task force, the local church will discover her gifts and her ministries in the marketplace," Craft says. "There are Southern Baptists sitting in the pews of our churches who are saying, 'There's got to be more to it than coming on Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night.'"

Task force members report the marketplace evangelism emphasis is an outgrowth of the lay renewal movement.

"Marketplace evangelism is a natural progression from lay renewal," Lackey explains. "Through lay renewal we realized God has called us. Now we're looking at where he has called us."

Marketplace evangelism is neither new nor unique to Southern Baptists, the task force members say.

"Without our knowing anything about it, God has been at work in the lives of people," Pierce says. "Marketplace evangelism was already happening when we got in on it."

"It isn't just Southern Baptists, it's Christians," adds Mrs. Craft. "There's room for everyone."

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But as America's largest Protestant denomination, Southern Baptists could become positive role models, she says. "Southern Baptists must accept the responsibility and do their part humbly. God has us where we are for this time."

The task force members also say they don't want to develop another denominational program.

"This is not a program," Mrs. Craft says. "It's a movement of the Spirit of God. The movement of God is so real. I hope we're not going to let it pass by and not do something with it."

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Dallas church aids Oregon mission,
finds unexpected blessings in giving

By Ken Camp

N-2000

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DALLAS (BP)--The scriptural promise that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" has new meaning for the members of Midway Road Baptist Church, Dallas, according to pastor Glenn Meredith.

About 18 months ago, realizing they had outgrown their existing facilities, members of Midway Road Baptist Church started a building finance program.

After raising \$50,000, church leaders began meeting with architects. Several building plans were presented, but none seemed wholly acceptable.

"We're on three acres and out of space. I just couldn't see investing \$1 million in a building that we'd still outgrow within a couple of years," said Meredith. "I just didn't have any peace about it.

"I prayed, 'Lord, we need land.' He answered, 'Give and it shall be given to you.'"

At that point, Meredith recalled a letter he had received from his former pastor who was now serving a mission congregation near Portland, Ore.

Scenic View Baptist Church in Troutdale, Ore., which had been meeting in a school, needed to purchase a building site. Two acres were available from the Home Mission Board, but the property would cost the mission \$50,000.

"We had the \$50,000 in our building fund, and I felt the Lord was telling me that we needed to give it to the mission," said Meredith. "But I said, 'God, if this is you, you're going to have to tell a whole bunch of other people, too.'"

The next morning, Meredith told the chairman of deacons at Midway Road that he believed it was God's will for the church to give its entire building fund to the mission in Oregon.

To his surprise, the deacon replied, "I have a real peace that what you're saying is from the Lord."

A short time later, the pastor of Scenic View Baptist Church came to Midway Road to preach a previously scheduled revival. During that week, 13 people made professions of faith in Christ and three others made commitments to vocational Christian service.

"But more than that, every night it was as if the Lord Jesus had just opened the door and walked in during the song service," Meredith said. "The Lord Jesus manifested himself to his people."

Coming on the heels of that revival, Meredith shared with his deacons the idea of donating the church's building fund to the Oregon mission congregation. The deacons voted unanimously to recommend that action to the church.

"The next Sunday morning, as I preached to the congregation and told them what I believed God was directing us to do, I could see smiles come over the faces of our people," Meredith said. "I told them to go home, pray about it and we'd come back that night to discuss it."

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That evening, Midway Road had a two-hour business meeting. About ten minutes was taken up with practical questions. The rest of the time was filled with testimonies by members who told how they felt giving the money to the Oregon mission was God's will for their church. The church then voted unanimously by secret ballot to make the gift.

By that time, Scenic View already had raised \$10,000, so Midway Road agreed to give them the needed \$40,000.

Soon afterward, a woman who had been visiting Midway Road came to Meredith expressing the desire to do something special for the church. She then wrote a check for \$35,000. A few days later, another individual made a \$5,000 gift to the church.

"Within three weeks after the church voted to give away the building fund, every cent was replaced," Meredith said. "There is such an overwhelming joy in being able to obey the Lord.

"God is looking for people through whom he can display His glory. We just need to be committed to doing his work his way, to cooperating with him in prayer and then to stepping out in faith."