

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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June 13, 1990

90-79

SBC issue depends
on opponents: Chapman By Ken Camp & Mark Wingfield

N-10

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Whether the inerrancy issue is settled in the Southern Baptist Convention depends upon the response of the 42 percent of messengers who voted against Morris Chapman, the newly elected president said.

Chapman held a news conference in the Louisiana Superdome the day of his election as president of the 14.8-million member denomination.

Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas, defeated Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta, in balloting on the opening day of the denomination's annual meeting.

In nominating Chapman, Houston pastor John Bisagno said Chapman's election would settle the inerrancy issue "once and forever."

However, after the election Chapman said that decision rests with the 42 percent of messengers who voted against him. He noted that outgoing SBC president Jerry Vines said last year the inerrancy issue had been settled.

"The large majority of Southern Baptists believe the issue is settled," Chapman said. "Whether or not the issue is settled in its most practical form is largely up those who have been voting otherwise, who have insisted that we are not a group who have believed in the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible."

He underscored that the split isn't as great as the 60-40 vote indicated. At least 90 percent of Southern Baptists adhere to inerrancy, he maintained.

Asked whether the other 10 percent should leave the convention, Chapman said he couldn't say. "I wouldn't presume to speak for those who hold different theological beliefs. The choice would have to be made by those persons."

In a prepared opening statement to the news conference, Chapman said he wanted to "enhance the cooperative spirit among Southern Baptists while standing steadfastly for biblical truth."

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Looking back at the past 12 years, Chapman said Southern Baptists "have been sending signals to leaders of our agencies and institutions that as to doctrinal integrity we need to come home to the faith of our fathers.

"Southern Baptists are a people of the book. We must perpetuate that belief through the institutional life of our beloved convention," he said.

Chapman said during the next year he wants to meet with the presidents of every SBC agency and institution "to listen to their heartbeat and let them hear mine.

"For peace and harmony to be effective throughout the rank and file, elected officials and paid personnel must gain a better understanding of each other," he said. "I think we've had too many press conferences and not enough personal conferences."

In meeting with those presidents, Chapman said he would emphasize his desire to "keep theological parameters in place and remove any political parameters."

He affirmed the 1987 Peace Committee report. His wife, Jodi, who was seated beside him at the news conference, served on the Peace Committee.

"The Peace Committee report was adopted overwhelmingly. It is more of a convention statement than a committee statement," Chapman said.

"The Peace Committee has done a great thing for all Southern Baptists for at least two reasons: they've helped describe what we meant all along by infallibility and inerrancy and asked us to go beyond perceived political parameters."

He declared he wants to "be a part of opening communication between trustees and administration." He affirmed trustees as the appropriate people to deal with questions raised about particular agencies and institutions.

Chapman said he does not favor "a wholesale housecleaning of any kind" in those institutions.

Asked about his own appointments to the committee on committees, Chapman said, "My commitment in the appointive process is to appoint those persons who believe in the perpetuation of allegiance to the perfect word of God and those who believe within the parameters of the Peace Committee report."

Reporters asked Chapman about dissension among his own congregation and messengers to the convention from that church. During the first day of the convention, at least one messenger from Chapman's church spoke against issues favored by the conservative leadership.

"The vast majority of my church and those attending the convention from my church have a great love for their pastor and great support for their pastor," Chapman replied.

Asked about the future of Baptist Press, the denomination's news service, Chapman said that in most instances the press has been "fair and honest."

"By and large, I believe they have had an honest desire to report the truth. I do believe that Baptist Press and the Baptist state papers can be of great help to us in returning our convention to harmony and peace without compromise on the infallibility and inerrancy of the Word of God."

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Conservatives sweep
top 3 SBC offices

By Mark Wingfield

N-10

Baptist Press
6/13/90

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Southern Baptists elected three conservatives as convention officers during the first day of their annual meeting in the Louisiana Superdome.

The new officers are Morris Chapman, president; Douglas Knapp, first vice president; and Fred Lowery, second vice president.

Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas, defeated Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta.

Chapman received 58 percent of the vote, or 21,471 votes compared to Vestal's 42 percent, or 15,753 votes.

More than 38,000 messengers had registered by the first election period on the program. In the presidential election, 97 percent of those messengers cast ballots.

Knapp, a retired missionary to Tanzania who now lives in Gainesville, Fla., defeated Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, former executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union who retired last year to marry and become a pastor's wife in Cincinnati.

Knapp received 60 percent of the vote or 16,348 votes, compared to Crumpler's 40 percent or 10,688 votes. In the race for first vice president, 70 percent of registered messengers voted.

Lowery, pastor of First Baptist Church in Bossier City, La., defeated two candidates for the second vice president's post: Raymond Boswell, a layman from Highland Baptist Church in Shreveport, La., and Steve Tondera, a layman from First Baptist Church in Huntsville, Ala.

Lowery received 64 percent of the vote or 6,347 votes compared to Boswell's 14 percent or 1,407 votes, and Tondera's 22 percent, or 2,178 votes.

In the race for second vice president, 26 percent of registered messengers voted.

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Witnessing blitz leads
to 521 professions of faith

N-00

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--In one day of door-to-door witnessing of the Southern Baptist Convention, Southern Baptists recorded 521 professions of faith before the annual meeting.

"I think it was tremendous," said Howard Ramsey, director of personal evangelism for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. "All the people I'm talking with say it was worthwhile."

This year's event attracted 1,334 volunteers compared to 2,025 people who witnessed before the annual meeting in Las Vegas last year. However, the number of professions of faith exceeds the Las Vegas total by 50.

In addition, the New Orleans volunteers contacted 14,011 homes, discovered 2,818 prospects and enrolled 391 people in Sunday school.

This year's totals do not include results from three associations. The director of missions for the associations could not be reached for his report.

Ramsey said he was especially pleased with the participation of 25 National Baptist churches. They recorded 205 professions of faith, and one church surveyed a subdivision to lay groundwork for a new church.

Throughout southern Louisiana and Mississippi, 113 churches participated in the event. Volunteers from 29 states were matched with local church members to canvas neighborhoods, asking for responses to a religious opinion survey.

The survey asked residents about their religious preference, why American families are under stress and if it is possible to know for certain that a person has eternal life.

Philip Pinckard, pastor of Memorial Baptist Church in Metairie, a suburb of New Orleans, said he liked using the survey approach.

"It's a very natural way to lead to asking questions about the person's spiritual life," Pinckard said. "We'll use it in the future."

The witnesses were told in a Friday afternoon rally that people in New Orleans are "very religious."

"The people of New Orleans believe most everything we believe, they simply don't know how to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior," said Buford Easley, pastor of Williams Boulevard Baptist Church in suburban Kenner.

Volunteers found a strong Catholic influence among residents. Fred Oaks, pastor of Quitman Baptist Church in Quitman, Ark., and his wife Linda said they found many people who think to be a Christian "all you have to do is be a good person."

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At least two passers-by stopped surveyors to ask what they were doing. A mail carrier, a Jehovah's Witness, said he was surprised to see Baptists knocking on doors.

Another woman stopped Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis to inquire about the activity. Kneeling outside her car and talking through the rolled down window, he led her to accept Christ as Savior.

Not all residents were as eager to listen. Bob Martin, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Paragould, Ark., said people were usually cordial, but many did not allow the volunteers to ask the survey questions.

Ramsey is already enlisting people for next year's evangelism effort before the convention in Atlanta.

"I'm dreaming of the day when every person who comes to the Southern Baptist Convention has such a desire to win people to Jesus Christ that they come early to do that," he said. "That's when we'll penetrate America with the gospel."

The witnessing efforts were sponsored by the Home Mission Board and the convention's host state convention.

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Southern Baptist student
vols return from Leningrad By Martha Skelton

N-7MB

Baptist Press
6/13/90

LENINGRAD, U.S.S.R. (BP)--The first group of volunteers Southern Baptists have ever sent to the Soviet Union -- 10 Baptist Student Union members and two leaders from Tennessee -- returned home June 8.

They spent more than two weeks helping restore an old church building for Leningrad's newest Baptist congregation, called the Temple of the Gospel. The building, about 100 years old, was constructed by Old Believers, an ancient branch of the Russian Orthodox Church. After being confiscated by the government during the Stalinist years, it was used as an industrial plant. It was turned over to Baptists last year.

Sergei Nikolaev, pastor of the church, expressed enthusiasm and gratitude for the project. It was the first time in history American Christians had been able to do this for their Soviet brothers and sisters, he said.

The volunteer team was the first of four going to Leningrad this summer to work in the renovation project. The student effort is sponsored by the national student ministries section of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and coordinated by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. In addition, the mission board provided \$150,000 toward the renovation.

The participants said they felt God's leading in their trip to Leningrad.

Jeff Ramsey of Johnson City, Tenn., wanted to go because of "the mystery of the Soviet Union." "I wanted to see with my own eyes history being made, see how God has opened doors for the gospel," he said.

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Bob Hall, an adult leader and BSU director at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, said, "It is like being in the United States in 1776."

They also felt it was a unique opportunity. "We're amazed at why God picked us to be here," said Jay Victory of Columbia, Tenn. "It's just hitting us how big this is. We're the first."

Most of the students prepared for the project by reading up on their destination and attending an orientation held by the sponsoring agencies. Their expectations varied. Some expected worse economic conditions than they found while others expected a high standard of living. They reflected varying degrees of understanding about the ideological situation in the Soviet Union and about what is going on in evangelical churches there.

Some wondered how they would be received. "I wondered how they would look at us -- (as) lazy, decadent capitalists?" said Matthew Evans of Brownsville, Tenn.

"In the past I read there was no church; Christians were sent to Siberia to die in the cold," said Richie Williams of Germantown, Tenn. "I never knew there was a church with Christians everywhere."

Flexibility lessons started early. The volunteers didn't get visas for the Soviet Union until May 18, two days before they were scheduled to leave on the trip. People in Leningrad thought they weren't coming on schedule, so no one met them at the airport. Someone came when they called, however, and assigned them to stay with Baptist families.

The team worked each day at the church. The students put in full days of hard manual labor -- forming bucket lines to move cement from dump trucks to the church building, spreading the cement for a basement floor, knocking holes in walls for windows to come, unloading a delivery of New Testaments and medical equipment. Church members, as well as a few paid workmen, also came to work. Women church members cooked their lunches.

They had a Russian work supervisor, but communication was difficult. "It's frustrating at times," said student Mike Turner of Knoxville, Tenn. "there's a lot of trial and error."

"We've worked very hard," said Ramsey. "One lady from the church (told us) she admired Americans coming and working so hard." No one on the team had much masonry experience, "but we are catching on fast," added Howard Murphy of Anderson, S.C. "There are no jackhammers; it's all sledgehammers and elbow grease."

Most of their memorable experiences involved people.

Tears came to Rodney Wilson's eyes as he told about the night the elderly widow with whom he and Bob Hall were staying pointed to a word in a Russian-English dictionary that meant bored or lonely. She said, "That was me. Then Rodney and Bob came." Wilson is an associate in the student ministries department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

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Staying with church members and getting to know them was a highlight as well as another of the "first" for the trip. Students and hosts alike seemed to relish the experience despite language and cultural differences.

Allan Lovelace of Morristown, Tenn., and Ramsey stayed with Andrei and Marina Smirnov, a couple almost their same age -- early to mid-20s. Their generosity and friendliness impressed Lovelace. "They're starting to say 'yes' and 'no,' and we are starting to say 'da' and 'nyet,'" he said.

Ramsey, a former U.S. Army sergeant, found that his host's years in the Soviet army almost mirrored his in years and rank. As he and Smirnov got to know each other, they found they both had similar experiences and attitudes toward each other. Through living and working together, they moved beyond Cold War rhetoric and stereotypes. "We consider each other personal friends now," Ramsey said.

Worship at the church was another lingering memory for team members. The language barrier didn't prevent them from worshipping and seeing how their hosts worship. The American students noted that services run longer than in America, lasting at least two hours, and feature several sermons and plenty of choir and special music.

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Campus ministers
tout diversity

By Tim Yarbrough

N-10
Baptist Press
6/13/90

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The diversity of membership of the Association of Southern Baptist Campus Ministers is what makes it unique among Southern Baptist organizations, said Raye Nell Dyer, outgoing president of the organization.

"Whether we call ourselves campus ministers or BSU (Baptist Student Union) directors, church staff persons or friends of student ministry, whether we serve in the East or the West or the North or the South, whether we are employed nationally or on the state level, whether we are male or female, we are all in this together. We are all a significant part of the student ministry family," she said.

Dyer, a campus minister and hospital chaplain in Galveston, Texas, closed the organization's annual two-day meeting by affirming role of the association as a "community of faith" on campus.

Officers for 1990-91 are president Woody Hammett, University of South Carolina, Columbia; president-elect Randy Deering, area director of student ministry, Orange County-San Diego, Calif.; vice president for administration Robert Turner, campus minister, Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia; vice president for membership, Dwain Gregory, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.; vice president for programs Lynn Davis, University of Maryland, Eastern Shore and Salisbury State; and vice president for publications Virginia Bridges, director of campus ministries, Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.

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Sons & Daughters
urged to remain

By Kathy Palen

N-20

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Four Southern Baptist leaders challenged college and seminary students to stay within the Southern Baptist Convention, working to effect change and further mission efforts.

Speaking to about 400 people gathered for a rally sponsored by the Sons and Daughters of the Southern Baptist Convention, the heads of three of the denomination's missions organizations and one of the candidates for the convention's presidency pointed to Southern Baptists' continuing commitment to missions and the need for the current generation of Southern Baptist students to carry on that commitment.

The SBC's organizing purpose, continuing cohesiveness and future hope revolve around the denomination's cooperative mission effort, said R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Missions Board.

Calling the SBC's cooperative plan of giving the envy of every mission group in the world and the best plan yet developed for Christians to support missions, Parks said, "I plead with you not to destroy this plan until you come up with a better plan."

As to the future of the denomination, Parks told members of Sons and Daughters, a group of students organized around the goal of ending strife within the SBC, "I hope you do better in the future than we're doing in the present."

Every Christian owes an unpayable debt to God, said Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta and a candidate for the SBC presidency.

"The older you grow as a Christian," Vestal continued, "the more you realize you owe to the past. The more you grow as a Southern Baptist, the more you realize you owe to those who have given their lives to forging Baptist distinctive."

Although also invited to speak during the rally, Morris Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas, and the other major presidential candidate, declined, citing other commitments.

Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Missions Board, Atlanta, told the crowd he believes the greatest days for Southern Baptist home missions are at hand.

"We have the money," Lewis said. "We have the manpower. We have the vision. We need you. God needs you. America needs you."

Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, commended the Sons and Daughters organization for having a clear focus on prayer and a focus on the future, rather than on the past.

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Baptist Press

Missions is SBC's heart,
WMU participants told By Scott Collins & Bob Stanley

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Missions is to Southern Baptists what the heart is to the human body, about 4,000 members of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union were told at their annual convention June 10-11 in New Orleans.

To illustrate the convention theme, "Hearts of One Accord," the WMU called on Joann Goatcher, a physician and former missionary to Thailand, to do its theme interpretation.

"The heartbeat for missions must begin at home and flow out to a lost nation and world," Goatcher said. "The first place it can be blocked is right in our own hearts and our own churches. It will not go past the church door if there is unforgiveness, a closed hand and a hardened heart."

The women's auxiliary marked its 102nd year by welcoming its new executive director, Dellanna O'Brien, and unanimously re-electing Marjorie McCullough of Alexandria, La., to her fifth term as president. Both are former missionaries. Pattie Dent of Clinton, Miss., also was re-elected to a fifth term as recording secretary.

Speakers during the two-day meeting mingled cautious optimism with warnings about possible trouble ahead for the missions support base which WMU represents in Southern Baptists' 37,700 churches.

Several urged Southern Baptists to work harder to make unity a reality in the strife-torn Southern Baptist Convention.

Monte Clendenning, conference coordinator for the World Missions/ Evangelism Center at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas urged "going back to the basics" in missions education, but "being flexible enough to look closely at our methods and be willing to alter them if by change we can better involve our people for world evangelization."

Earlier, Executive Director O'Brien emphasized the importance of "keeping missions education alive in the hearts of our children. The hope of our convention is in the commitment of its young people."

An author from another denomination, Ruth Tucker of Grand Rapids, Mich., underscored the need for accord. She urged Southern Baptists to "go forward to serve him (Jesus) and seek to avoid the disharmony and disunity that the world would emphasize."

The closing speaker of the WMU meeting, Keith Parks, of Richmond, Va., told participants Baptists must quit "deceiving themselves" by allowing their culture to interpret Christianity, rather than allowing their Christianity to guide culture. Parks is president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

"We have assumed some things about Christianity," Parks said. "We have assumed that Christianity is a comfortable lifestyle."

If Baptists will correct the cultural misconceptions and focus on the reasons for missions "we will have hearts of one accord," he added.

Musicians examine
worship, witness

By Eddy Oliver

N-10

NEW ORLEANS, (BP)--Southern Baptist musicians focused on "The Mission ... Worship and Witness" at a two-day conference preceding the 133rd annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, in New Orleans.

A preview of the new Baptist Hymnal and numerous concerts highlighted the sessions at First Baptist Church.

The new hymnal will be released in March of 1991, said Wesley Forbis, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department in Nashville.

"This hymnal was not produced for the church music department, but instead for the people in the churches," he said, adding that the hymnal committee reviewed over 4,000 hymns submitted to come up with the 625 pieces of music.

Forbis announced that for every new hymnal purchased, one copy will be given to a mission church.

Participants sang from a "sampler" of hymns from the new hymnal, the first singing by a volunteer group.

During a business session, musicians presented the W. Hines Sims award to Jane Manton Marshall, who teaches choral conducting and music theory at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

They also memorialized Carl Perry, emeritus minister of music at West Hills Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tenn., and Tom Westmoreland, retired director of the music department for the South Carolina Baptist Convention in Columbia.

New officers elected were Dot Pray, keyboard consultant for the Mississippi Baptist Convention in Jackson, vice president of the denominational division; Lynn Madden, minister of music at Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark., vice president of the local church division; and Betty Bedsole, professor of music at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., vice president of the music educators division.

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Pastors' Conference views

truth, adversity, veracity By Jim Lowry & Tim Nicholas

N-10 Baptist Press
6/13/90

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Truth, adversity and defense of the veracity of the word of God drew the attention of speakers at the 1990 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference in New Orleans.

Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in of suburban Memphis, Tenn., told the pastors: "It is better to be divided by truth than to be united in error."

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Unity is a wonderful thing, good and pleasant. But beloved, it must be the unity of the spirit.

Unity, yes -- but unification at the price of peace, absolutely not. We have some today who would jettison truth on the altar of cooperation.

Charles Stanley said pastors ask how long they have to live in adversity. "Until God is finished with his purpose with you," he said, adding that a preacher of the gospel has no privilege to "walk away and still be obedient to God."

He added: "There is something worse than being in a bad situation. That's being out of the will of God in a good situation."

John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church of Houston, urged Southern Baptist pastors to defend the veracity of the word of God and "hold the line when you can." He added, "There is no way to overstate the disdain God has for the person who tampers with the integrity of the word of God."

John McArthur, pastor of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, Calif., spoke on being a "man of God." He said that a man of God is known by what he flees from, citing greed and all that goes with it. "No man who prostitutes the Word of God for personal gain is a man of God," he said.

Dwight "Ike" Reighard, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Ga., warned the audience to "watch out for cut and dried theologies" which say that adversity is caused by unconfessed sin. "We know it's not true."

Bailey Smith of Atlanta said pastors need to preach that they find no fault in the miracle of Jesus's birth, the majesty of the cross, the magnificence of his resurrection and the mightiness of his return.

Morris Chapman, candidate for SBC president, spoke to the Pastors' Conference on the topic of John 3:16. "We live in a world in bondage to a personal devil," he said. "And the time is running out. The whole world needs to hear the message of John 3:16."

Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas, said that God's love is longer than the longest night of agony, an everlasting love. "God gave us his son in vicarious death," he said.

In a business session, the pastors elected Richard Lee, pastor of Rehoboth Baptist Church, Tucker, Ga., as their 1990-91 president; Ruffin Snow, pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla., vice president; and David Hankins, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Lake Charles, La., secretary-treasurer.

Avoid overload, error,
Vines tells SBC messengers

By Ken Camp

N-10

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention must be alert to the tendency toward "organizational overload and doctrinal error" or be destined for the "garbage dump of denominations," convention President Jerry Vines said June 12 .

Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla., delivered his presidential address on "the glory of the church" at the opening session of the three-day meetings of the in New Orleans.

"Those denominations that affirm the inspiration, inerrancy and infallibility of scripture have a bright future. But those that do not are destined for the garbage dump of denominations," Vines said.

Unless churches remain vigilant in protecting doctrinal integrity and local identity, he said the denomination could become a "mustard tree monstrosity with bureaucratic branches infested with blasphemous birds."

While denominational loyalty is desirable, Vines said, it must not supplant loyalty to Christ and the Bible.

Furthermore, he stressed that the choice of Sunday school literature used, the degree of financial support for cooperative missions endeavors and the organizations present in a congregation all are prerogatives of local churches. Churches must not allow themselves to be intimidated by "bureaucratic bullies" because of their choices, he said.

At the same time, Vines said that congregational independence should be tempered by interdependence on like-minded churches cooperating in missions and benevolence. "We can do together what we cannot do alone," he said.

Vines pointed to glory of the church universal, the church local, the church denominational and the church eternal.

"If you try to build a church on any foundation other than the Lord Jesus Christ, it is destined to fall," Vines said. "It is his church and he will build it."

Vines is completing his second one-year term as president of the 14.9-million-member denomination.

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Nominations receive
OK from messengers

By Kathy Palen

N-10

Baptist Press
6/13/90

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Messengers to the 1990 Southern Baptist Convention voted to adopt the report of the convention's Committee on Nominations despite challenges to several nominees and to the committee's chairman.

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The report included 263 individuals nominated to serve on the boards of trustees of the 24 entities related to the 14.9-million-member denomination.

Chairman Roland Lopez, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in McAllen, Texas, recommended four changes in the committee's report as released through Baptist Press in late April.

Lopez recommended the replacement of two nominees, both of whom are members of his congregation. Because of a failure to make contributions to the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget, that church is no longer considered to be a "cooperating" Southern Baptist church and thus its members may not be elected to serve on SBC boards or commissions.

On those same grounds, Lopez's own service as chairman of the Committee on Nominations came under question. SBC President Jerry Vines, in consultation with the convention parliamentarians and legal counsel, held that Lopez could serve in that office since his church was a "cooperating church" at the time of his election.

The committee recommended that Southern Baptist Home Mission Board nominee Wencelago Rangel be replaced by J. Walter Carpenter of Houston and Education Commission nominee Antonio Villalobos be replaced by James Stewart of El Paso, Texas.

In addition, the committee recommended the addition of Joe Wedan of Chanute, Kan., as a member of the Brotherhood Commission and John Bisagno of Houston as an at-large member of the Baptist World Alliance.

David Montoya, pastor of First Baptist Church of Gravette, Ark., and a member of the Committee on Nominations, announced in May that he had prepared a minority report containing more than 30 "alternate nominations" to the committee's report.

Montoya's attempt to present those nominations was scuttled when Vines refused to reverse a ruling that only one challenge to the committee's report could be made at a time.

Two attempts to amend the report -- one made by Montoya and the other by Floyd Parker of South Carolina -- both failed.

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Ministers' wives urged
to 'inherit blessing'

By Breena Kent Paine

Baptist Press
6/13/90

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Ministers' wives were encouraged Tuesday to "inherit the blessing," in New Orleans June 12.

Addressing the Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives luncheon, Shirley Dobson told the 1,027 women, "Many of you think the burden you're carrying is too heavy, but what you are doing has eternal significance.

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"While you're out doing the Lord's work, don't neglect your own families," said the wife of James Dobson, family psychologist. She added mothers should fervently and consistently pray for their children, arrange quality time to spend with them, and create family traditions that give "a sense of identity and uniqueness to a family."

"Whether we like it or not, we are the thermostats of our homes. We determine the temperature," continued Dobson, a member of the board of directors for Focus on the Family, a non-profit radio program providing counseling and advice for Christian families. "The woman's responsibility in the home is to provide a sense of warmth, beauty, and relaxation."

"I believe we are in a civil war of values right now. We must gear up the foundation of our family. ... Who is going to provide that if we don't as mothers?"

Ministers' wives should remember the task to which God has called them -- being a part of their husbands' ministries and providing a warm atmosphere at home, she reminded.

In other action, 1990 SBMW President Lynda Estep passed the gavel to Carole Hughes, wife of John E. Hughes, pastor of First Baptist Church, Independence, Mo. Other 1991 officers are Margaret Carter, wife of Charles Q. Carter, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jonesboro, Ga., vice president; Margaret Murchison, wife of Roger Murchison, minister at First Baptist Church, Augusta, Ga., secretary-treasurer; and June Baggett, wife of Hudson D. Baggett, editor of The Alabama Baptist, Birmingham, corresponding secretary.

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HMB highlights
starting churches

By Bob Stanley

N-AMMB Baptist Press
6/13/90

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--A top Southern Baptist Home Mission Board official and four of its most successful church planters challenged Southern Baptists June 12 to get serious about winning America for Christ.

Charles L. Chaney, vice-president for extension, said the board is ahead of the pace needed to meet its goal of having 50,000 churches by A.D. 2000. Last year it started new churches at the rate of three and a half churches every day, he noted.

But he urged the 12,000 messengers at the home missions emphasis to come back next year and be able to say, "We're building four a day."

Chaney listed three reasons why he asked participants at the SBC session to commit themselves anew to higher levels of church-starting:

-- "Because of our constant obligation to the lost." Some have estimated that as many as 170 million Americans do not know Jesus Christ as their Savior, he said. This means that only four other nations in the world have greater non-Christian populations than this country, he said.

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-- "Because of the current opportunity we have in this nation." For the first time, one denomination has the numerical strength and ethnic diversity to reach the nation for Christ, he said, "and that's Southern Baptists." With congregations encompassing 97 native groups and 101 languages, including 1,300 black churches, Chaney said, "We can address this whole nation."

-- "Because of our commitment to the Great Commission." Chaney traced the development of churches as the Holy Spirit led disciples in the early church, noting that wherever the disciples went they made other disciples and planted churches.

At the close of the service, messengers willing to commit to leading their church to start new congregations were asked to check a card on the back of the program and give it to home missionaries standing by the exits.

Preceding Chaney's appeal, four other church planters from Florida, New England, Louisiana and California told how they are helping to start new congregations. They are Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Mission Viejo, Calif.; G. Franklin Beam, church planter strategist for the South Florida region, Sunrise; Ignatius Meimaris, missionary and language missions director for the Baptist Convention of New England, Northborough, Mass.; and Kenneth Weathersby, pastor of Douglas Avenue Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, La.

At the beginning of the service, board President Larry Lewis presented its first annual plaque to the church that has baptized the most people in the past year. It went to Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, Ariz. Presenting the plaque, Lewis noted that North Phoenix has led the convention in baptisms during seven of the 10 years in the 1980s: 1981, '82, '83, '87, '88 and '89. In 10 years, the church has baptized more than 11,400 people.

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Vestal 'defeated
but not demoralized'

By Jim Newton

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NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Saying he was defeated but not demoralized, Daniel Vestal appealed for moderate and conservative Southern Baptists to schedule a formal dialogue on the future of the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta, lost the election as president of the Southern Baptist Convention to Morris Chapman of Wichita Falls, Texas, by a 58-42 percent margin, June 12.

Vestal told about 700 persons attending a June 13 breakfast sponsored by "Baptists Committed to the SBC" about his personal reactions to the election, possible scenarios for the future of the convention, and appeals to those who have been involved in the 12-year struggle within the convention.

"Now is not the time to despair," Vestal said. "Now is the time to fill your life with hope-filled tasks."

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He urged the executive committee of Baptists Committed to provide a forum, perhaps a retreat for invited participants open to the press, for formal dialogue on the future of the SBC.

It was one of seven appeals Vestal issued during his first public appearance following the election. He issued the following specific appeals:

-- To Morris Chapman and the presidents of the SBC for the past 12 years who now control the denomination, asking them "broaden the tent of involvement" in the SBC as they have suggested publicly.

-- To pastors of prominent SBC churches such as John Bisagno of Houston; Joel Gregory of Fort Worth; Jim Henry of Orlando, Fla.; Charles Fuller of Roanoke, Va., and others asking that they live up to their promise "of a historic new day" in the SBC.

-- To the trustees of SBC agencies, urging them to affirm, trust and support denominational leaders and stop embarrassing publicly "these good and Godly men."

-- To those who voted for Chapman, asking them "to accept the rest of us as brothers and sisters and stop accusing us and implying we do not believe the Bible just because we don't agree on interpretation of Scripture or support your political movement."

-- To those who voted for him (Vestal), appealing for them to practice Christian charity, and focus their attention on a sovereign God and on the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

-- To all Southern Baptists, pleading for them "to let the love of Jesus Christ fill our hearts so that it overflows to other people."

Vestal, who was greeted with three standing ovations during the breakfast, confessed he did not expect the kind of outcome in the election the previous day. Vestal received only 15,753 votes (42 percent) compared to Chapman's 21,471 (58 percent).

Vestal said he could offer no reason or explanation for the wide vote margin, even though he had questioned the reason why all day and all night.

Vestal said the election was not about believing the Bible as the infallible Word of God. "The election yesterday was about the future -- whether we will be a united convention that recaptures a vision for cooperative missions and evangelism.

"That vision failed," Vestal said. Even though they failed in the election, and in the appeal for the convention to refocus its attention on missions and evangelism, Vestal said he and those who supported him have done "what is right."

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Vestal said he and others involved in "Baptists Committed" have sought to reach out for peace, reconciliation, openness, fairness, trust and freedom. "We have called for a return to the priesthood of all believers, for congregational polity, for cooperative missions, for religious liberty and separation for church and state, for unity in diversity..."

The key question now is, "Where do we go from here?" Vestal offered five possible scenarios for the future:

1. The present leadership could moderate enough to bring us back together by balancing the appointments to SBC committees and boards.
2. The present SBC leadership could maintain "its present rigid posture" and some churches would leave the SBC and affiliate with American Baptist Churches and/or the Southern Baptist Alliance.
3. Southern Baptists might return to a "societal" approach creating mission societies that could receive and distribute funds to mission causes.
4. New organizations might develop to provide continuing educational and political involvement.
5. State conventions might secede from the SBC or change the way in which they support national agencies through the Cooperative Program budget.

Vestal stressed he was not advocating any of the five scenarios, but only echoing ideas he had heard in recent months.

Each individual Baptist must decide for himself or herself what the future holds. "No pope, no presbytery, no president, and no judge can tell us what to do," he said.

"Each of us under the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit must follow the dictates of our conscience. Don't look to me to tell you what to do -- look instead to God."

Vestal said each Baptist church and congregation must also decide for itself about the future. "This is the Baptist way."

Jimmy R. Allen, of Fort Worth, Texas, chairman of Baptists Committed, urged the 700 attending the breakfast to return home and organize effectively on the state convention level.

"Meanwhile, the battle moves home to your state convention," Allen said. "You may think the battle is at Southern (Baptist Theological) Seminary, but it is also at your university and your alma mater," said Allen, president of Faith and Family Communication Ministries.