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NOTE TO EDITORS: Following are the pastoral remarks delivered by Southern Baptist Convention President Morris Chapman in his pastoral address to the SBC Executive Committee Sept. 17. Baptist Press was instructed by the Executive Committee to run these remarks to accompany the full text of the address which was in (BP) dated 9/19/90. Due to circumstances beyond our control, we were unable to print these remarks until today. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS -- PASTORAL REMARKS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
September 17, 1990

I want to say a pastoral word to you as I begin this address. There are many people in our Southern Baptist Convention who have a great burden; many of us in this room and people all over the Southern Baptist Convention. There are those of us who are leaders and there are those of us who are followers who have heavy hearts, who are burdened, and I hope I can give you a word that will be an encouragement to all Southern Baptists. I believe that we serve a sovereign God. And that although there are instances when we believe things to be out of control, he is in control. We say it, but it is time for us to believe it as we have never believed.

There are a few verses of scripture which come to my mind which have meant a great deal to me through the years. Most, if not all of us in this room have experienced times of heaviness, heartache and struggle. When we live long enough, we discover that life is not as easy, nor do the dreams come as quickly as we might have imagined. For me, when those times have come, God has lead me to a number of scriptures; one of those is Isaiah 43, verses 1 and 2. The Bible says, "... Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Also on several occasions God has spoken to my heart through Isaiah 43, in verses 18 and 19. "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." That is a promise of God's Word.

Regardless of what we may face. Regardless of the pilgrimage we may have in our personal and corporate lives, the promise of God's Holy Word is that he shall be with us. He has not forsaken us. He has not left us. Perhaps we are finding ourselves in a broken state. Perhaps God is bringing us to that moment when we have to realize more than ever that God is sovereign and that as Jesus said, "Without me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

I am reminded that our resources are in heaven. I know that as we meet for this occasion, we principally discuss budgets and financial allocations, but I am confident in the Lord Jesus that he shall not fail us. Our great need in this hour is not financial resources; the great need is spiritual resources. We must realize that God is God. He is on his throne and there he shall remain. I believe it is an hour when we must be encouraged. There can be encouragement in moments of despair and depression. That encouragement can come from our deep faith in a living God who promised never to let us down.

To those who have heavy hearts, whether you are in this room, or in the larger Southern Baptist family, I want to say, "Take heart, for God is with us."

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Then I want to read a few words from Ephesians, chapter 4. Listen if you will, "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind and that ye put on the new man, which after God has created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man the truth with his neighbor: For we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:23-32).

The time has come for Southern Baptists to speak kindly of one another. As president of all Southern Baptists, I will stand against all unkind, cutting public proclamations against any other Southern Baptist, no matter from which corner those fighting words may come. There is room for conviction, but there is no room for unkindness. There is no room for a lack of love. There is no room for refusal to communicate.

I hope these pastoral words will be encouraging to every person in this room, especially to you who are leaders in Southern Baptist life. All of us have a grave responsibility. For there are many others who are dependent upon our words, dependent upon our leadership, dependent upon our spirit, dependent upon our attitude. Many who have no opportunity to speak as I am speaking. Many who have no opportunity to act in an official capacity. Many who do not understand. All they see is our action. All they hear is our words. Our actions and our words should never weaken our witness for the Lord Jesus Christ nor discredit Southern Baptists before the world.

Now that is a word of encouragement. I must say to you that whether our words are spoken in private to a dear friend or shouted from the housetop, a wrong attitude and a wrong word spoken does not honor our Lord Jesus Christ. Our spirit must be Christlike, sufficient to encourage Southern Baptists that, "This is a new day, and our Lord does know the way through the wilderness."

I do have prepared remarks. From this point on, the things which I will say will be given to you in printed form as you leave. Perhaps you can listen just a little bit closer than if you were trying to take notes. I'm going to simply read it.

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HMB introduces new
evangelism emphasis

By Mark Wingfield

N-NMB

Baptist Press
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ATLANTA (BP)--Evangelism should not be an independent program but a continuous process within the life of a church, Darrell Robinson said.

Robinson is vice president for evangelism with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. During the National Soul Winning Conference Sept. 20-22 he introduced "Total Church Life" as the HMB's overall emphasis on evangelism for the coming years.

Total Church Life is a "growth without gimmicks approach," Robinson said. "It's more than a one-time program. I'm talking about a continuous process."

"You don't bring life through a program," he said. "You can take any evangelistic program we have at the Home Mission Board and superimpose it on a dead church and you'll still have a dead church."

"My highest goal as evangelism director is to help influence the Southern Baptist mentality about evangelism," Robinson declared. "We've got to develop a mindset of reaching every person, not overlooking anybody."

Robinson called for the church to reclaim a holistic approach to ministry rather than focusing only on one aspect of ministry. "Evangelism is the consequence of the church being the church," he said.

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"Our world has all but forgotten what church is about, and so have many churches. The greatest need in America is for the church to be the church -- I mean to come back to be the New Testament church, that first century church in a 20th century world."

The church has one function, and that is to be the body of Christ in the world, Robinson said. He explained that function is expressed in three tasks: to exalt the savior, to equip the saints and to evangelize sinners.

"We can't do one without the other," he said. "If we focus on one of these things to the exclusion of the others, we become unbalanced.

"One of the most common ways to heresy is to move too far into any one good thing."

There's more to church than just evangelism, Robinson declared. "Evangelism is not complete and real until we equip those we evangelize to evangelize others."

To accomplish this requires "total penetration through total participation," he suggested.

Robinson encouraged churches to define a specific geographic region they will serve, and then take responsibility for presenting the gospel to every person in that region.

That region may not be evangelized in one day or one year, and the congregation may not immediately be able to address every need, he explained.

"You can start with what you've got where you are," Robinson suggested. "One of the biggest cop-outs Southern Baptists have about witnessing is, 'I don't know enough.'

"You do know enough," Robinson said. "Start where you are.

"I know a lot of people who would be the finest witnesses if they were down in Brazil or on some foreign field, but they're not lifting a finger to witness to their neighbors."

Having a proper theology is not sufficient if a church doesn't act upon that theology, Robinson said. "We may be New Testament in creed, but we must be New Testament in conduct as well. We're to be God's people on mission."

Successful evangelism and church growth also requires an acceptance of diversity, he added.

"We've made the mistake too often of trying to force everybody into the same mold. Diversity is a delight to the Lord. There are no two Christians alike."

Acceptance of diversity will create inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness, he added. "A fellowship we have to protect and keep from expanding will eventually strangle a church.

"If God moved today and gave revival in the average church, it would be over in three weeks. We need to start doing things differently," Robinson said.

"We need revival in our churches if we're going to reach America for Christ."

The Total Church Life seminar, which will be taught across the United States, is based on Robinson's book of the same title.

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Evangelism conference
matches words with action

By Mark Wingfield

N-AMMS

Baptist Press
9/25/90

ATLANTA (BP)--Participants in a national evangelism conference put feet to their words, resulting in 27 professions of faith over a three-day period.

One evening of the National Soul Winning Conference was devoted to door-to-door visitation through churches in the Atlanta area. The Home Mission Board conference was held at Roswell Street Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., an Atlanta suburb.

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The door-to-door effort resulted in 779 visits and 20 professions of faith, said Howard Ramsey, HMB director of personal evangelism.

Another seven professions of faith were recorded as participants presented the gospel to people they met in hotels, restaurants and along the streets.

The last day of the conference included a period of testimonies about the witnessing encounters. One man told about witnessing to his shuttle bus driver and leading the driver in a prayer of commitment while stopped at the side of the road.

Another man told about stopping to witness to a man walking along the roadside. Others told about not finding people at home when attempting visits but afterward encountering strangers who were receptive to the gospel.

"The only reason people are not being saved is because we're not asking," one man concluded in his testimony.

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Late applicants boost
China teachers program

Baptist Press
9/25/90

N.F.M.B

HONG KONG (BP)--A late upsurge in applicants to teach in China this fall has given fresh impetus to Southern Baptist work there.

Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist aid organization, placed 55 teachers and students in China in September, according to Jack Shelby, CSI's Hong Kong-based administrator. Just four months ago, only seven applicants had asked to teach in China during this school year.

Already, CSI has begun to look for more teachers and a variety of medical specialists for next year.

"A lot of people are surprised that we have 55 people in China after we were so desperately short of teachers in May," Shelby said. "We're in much better shape than we expected, with only two less than last year. The Lord has answered our prayers."

Shelby attributed the sudden increase in applications largely to a news article in May that reported the severe teacher shortage for CSI's China work.

Also, several CSI teachers in China last year who had planned to leave decided to stay because of the need, Shelby said. Of the 55 CSI personnel in China this fall, 48 are teachers and seven are language students.

Chinese university officials already have asked CSI to supply about 60 teachers next year. CSI personnel needs for China next year include openings for 40 short-term workers; 10 career employees in English teaching, business administration and nursing; eight teachers for the Amity Foundation, the social service organization begun by Chinese Christians; and two language students.

Among requests for short-term personnel, CSI has asked for nine medical specialists to conduct one- and two-week workshops in Chinese hospitals. Specialists are needed in heart surgery, cardiology, obstetrics and gynecology, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, pediatrics, gastroenterology, oral surgery, and ear, nose and throat.

"We'll be looking at 75 to 80 people in China next year if everyone we've asked for comes through," said Shelby, explaining that married couples likely will fill many of the slots. "Hopefully Southern Baptists will continue to respond like they have the past few months, and we'll be able to increase our commitment in China."

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Jerusalem Church
construction stalls

By Mike Creswell

F-FMB

JERUSALEM (BP)--Lack of money is doing what arson, firebombs, robberies, legal battles and years of harassment could not do -- halting reconstruction of the Narkis Street Baptist Congregation's building.

The 310-member congregation in Jerusalem used the last of its available construction funds in August, but still needs \$315,000 to complete its building before its permit expires next March. Reconstruction has dragged on since the original chapel, built in 1933, burned in October 1982.

Authorities attributed that fire to arson carried out by extremists. No arrests were ever made in the case. After the 1982 fire, the church battled six years for a rebuilding permit from the local government. Getting the permit became a "political football" between staunchly Orthodox Jewish leaders who wanted to kill the project outright and secular Jewish officials who thought the church should be permitted to rebuild, said Southern Baptist representative Pat Hoaldrige, pastor at Narkis Street.

The legal struggle over the permit ultimately reached Israel's supreme court, where three justices encouraged the Baptist congregation to move to a different location. Eventually the case was settled out of court and the congregation stayed put.

The church obtained a permit in March 1988 to rebuild its chapel only by making major concessions on the building's design. The size of the building was reduced to less than half that originally proposed. The congregation agreed to meet unusual and expensive requirements for soundproofing, including thick walls, insulation and a specially designed ceiling. Those additions and the many delays raised construction costs from about \$800,000 to \$1.5 million.

During the 1980s, the church was faced with a demonstration against its existence, harassments, threats, break-ins, vandalism and robberies. Those episodes continued earlier harassments that occurred before the fire, including a late-night firebomb attack in 1973 on adjacent Baptist House, whose ministries include a bookstore and counseling service. Another bomb in 1977 broke windows, but neither attack hurt anyone.

Windows in Baptist House have been broken out by rocks, bricks and metal pipes at least 10 times. Since the fire, members have worshiped in a "tent" made of tin-and-fence walls and a plywood roof. On Oct. 9, the church will have used this "temporary" structure for eight years.

An international congregation of more than 250 people meets Saturday mornings; a Hebrew-language congregation with about 60 meets on Saturday afternoons.

To date, Narkis Street members have raised about \$950,000 for reconstruction; the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has contributed about \$235,000.

Some church members feel they have raised all the money they can, said John Anthony, Southern Baptist representative and Baptist House director, who has worked with the congregation for 15 years. He is leading the congregation while Hoaldrige is in the United States on furlough.

Although Anthony described the congregation's general mood as "up," he said some members have left the church, feeling they cannot continue to meet in the tent, especially in the winter.

"Others feel that God will provide the rest of the money needed. He always has before," Anthony said. Much work has been done on the new building, he said, but "at this time there is no electricity, no flooring, no bathrooms, no windows. We don't consider it usable."

"It's very disappointing we've come so far under such difficult circumstances to be stopped by inadequate finances," said Anthony as the church's hard-won, three-year building permit nears expiration in March.

The Foreign Mission Board has listed the Narkis Street construction project as a priority need for which to seek funds, according to David Coleman, the FMB's development director.

Married couples learn
intimacy takes hard work

F-10 (Texas)

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)--The possibility that achieving intimacy in marriage will take a lot of hard work is often the furthest thought from the minds of newlyweds, co-owners of a Texas counseling firm said.

"Intimacy is a journey, not a state or condition in which you find yourself," said Dan McGee, a marriage and family therapist who is president of Metro Counseling Associates Inc., of Arlington, Texas. His wife, Sandra, is co-owner of the mental health and management consulting firm, and both are members of First Baptist Church of Arlington.

The McGees led seminars on intimacy at the first San Antonio, Texas, Fall Festival of Marriage, Sept. 7-9. Ten weekend conferences for couples are being held nationwide this fall by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

Dan McGee said people have both a need and a fear of intimacy, and those ambiguous feelings leave married couples confused when the newness of matrimony wears off.

Everyone requires affirmation, he said, a quality that is abundant in the early part of a marriage but likely disappears the longer couples are together.

When couples no longer notice each others' good traits, disillusionment sets in, he said.

"Disillusionment with your partner is bound to happen," McGee said, "because we are not perfect. It's a natural stage, so don't fear it if you're there. It's a stage where many people give up."

The McGees outlined six ingredients of intimacy including individuality and self-esteem, mutual respect, commitment, trust, sensitivity and physical intimacy -- sexual and non-sexual.

"Poor self-esteem can destroy a marriage more than anything," he said. "You have to have two whole people coming together to make a marriage, not two halves.

"Separateness is an element of intimacy," he added. "As we know more about who we are as separate persons, our togetherness is strengthened. Let there be spaces in your togetherness."

Couples also must exercise mutual respect for each other, Sandra McGee said.

Listening to what a spouse has to say is a good start in showing respect, she said. Respecting a spouse includes valuing him or her as a person, taking the time to understand by spending time in communication and accepting differences.

McGee said marriages that make it must have commitment.

"Nothing will ever be as difficult as trying to achieve intimacy in your marriage, but it will never, ever happen without commitment. Love is not enough," he said. "The commitment is our pledge to never stop working on our relationship."

Sandra McGee said partners can show sensitivity through affirmation and thoughtfulness. "Affirmation is extremely important and immeasurable in marriage. Learn to say thank-you in many ways."

Finally, the McGees said physical intimacy can be achieved through sexual and non-sexual means.

"God created marriage so we could have intimacy with another person on this earth," said Sandra McGee. "Most good marriages are made a day at a time. You have to ask yourself where you want to be in intimacy and how you want to get there."