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November 9, 1990

90-155

EDITOR'S NOTE: Following are two parts of a 4-part series on stress. The other two parts will be run later.

Spiritual toll of stress
includes guilt, doubt

By Linda Lawson

F-56B

NASHVILLE (BP)--Depression, high blood pressure, heart ailments, headaches, nervous tics, lower back pain, inability to sleep, addictions -- the list of problems that can be symptoms of an overdose of stress seems endless.

Too much stress is perhaps the number one malady of Americans, including ministers. Among participants in the church and seminarian medical plan administered by the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, stress-related illnesses were the most costly item in insurance claims filed in 1989.

Stress is costing American business in excess of \$150 billion annually in health-care costs, lost work time and poor quality of work.

Joe Richardson, personnel counselor in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's human resources department, said Christians are as susceptible to the debilitating effects of too much stress as other people. Christians also have a resource for dealing with stress that is unavailable to other persons, access to God.

Richardson emphasized that stress, at an optimal level, results in creativity, mental alertness, high productivity, energy, excitement, exhilaration and a feeling of challenge.

Too little stress can lead to boredom, apathy, accidents and absenteeism. Too much stress causes irritability, fatigue, anger, illness and burnout.

Richardson noted that some issues may cause greater stress for Christians than other people.

"One of the things the Bible teaches is to always do our best. This will always create tension which can be good. But when we exceed our limits, as in how much we can do, we feel stress in terms of painful hurt," said Richardson, author of a Discipleship Training Equipping Center module, "The Christian and Stress."

Sometimes, Christian people misunderstand God's desire that they do their best to mean they are to be perfect, said Richardson.

"They can be very unforgiving of themselves," he added. "It takes a real maturity to accept God's forgiveness."

In another area, "lots of Christians feel guilty when their actions do not make everything OK for family or friends," said Richardson. "And Christian adults struggle with the stress that comes from having to choose, due to time or energy limitations, among several things they feel they ought to do."

Also, less mature Christians who experience the highs of a spiritual mountaintop may feel guilt and doubt when life gets difficult, he said.

Stress among believers is evident in the Bible, Richardson noted.

He cited Peter, the disciple, who, while waiting outside the courtyard of the high priest when Jesus was on trial, denied three times he even knew Jesus.

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"Only one week earlier Peter had witnessed Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. He is bound to have been confused and frightened and frustrated -- all the things we call stress. Out of that he denied Christ.

"He felt terrible about what he had done," Richardson continued. "He repented. He sought God's healing power and came back to do incredible things in God's service in only a few short days.

"My guess is that Peter got some rest, he had time to pray and think, and God dealt with him directly. Today, in different ways, Jesus deals with us directly to handle life situations," said Richardson.

In the Old Testament, Jonah was running away from his problems and from God when he was swallowed by a whale, said Richardson.

"God had to overtake him and make him slow down, listen and deal with his situation. Sometimes God does this to us, though not in the belly of a large fish," he laughed.

Unusual, exciting experiences also create stress for people, said Richardson. Take King Belshazzar, who in the fifth chapter of the book of Daniel, saw a large finger writing on a wall.

The King James Version says "'the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against the other,'" noted Richardson. "In other words, his knees knocked!"

In "The Christian and Stress," Richardson outlined three stages of physical response to stressors.

Alarm is the first stage. Breathing, heart and blood pressure rates increase. Muscles tense. Digestion slows to allow more blood to flow to the brain.

"The body is prepared for fight or flight," said Richardson.

When a stressful situation is not quickly resolved, the body moves into the resistance stage where it seeks to adapt to the stressor. High blood pressure, heart disease, migraine and tension headaches, backaches, strokes, ulcers and diarrhea are some of the consequences.

Normally, physical symptoms that arise during the resistance stage get people's attention, and they take steps to reduce the stressors in their lives, said Richardson.

Those who do not reduce their stressors move into the exhaustion stage when the body no longer can adapt to the demands of stress. Damage of a vital bodily function or even death is the result.

"God is an orderly God," said Richardson. "In creating the world, he set up an orderly but complex system which operates on basic principles and rules. It is our task to figure out what those are. Many are written for us in the Bible."

The task of the Christian is to learn God's laws and live by them. When a law is broken, stress is one result.

God's laws specify we are not to lie, steal, covet or commit adultery, noted Richardson. The law of gravity also is one of God's laws.

"If we defy gravity by being overweight, we're going to have back trouble and difficulty walking. We're going to have stress," said Richardson.

The problem with too many Christians today is they want relief from the stress caused by breaking the laws of God without stopping the behavior that created the stress.

Despite their willful nature, God still desires for his children peace and lives free of harmful stress, said Richardson.

Jesus said he came to bring us life, abundant life," said Richardson. "That doesn't mean everyone will be healthy or without problems. I think this means that even while dealing with problems we may still have abundant life. We may have peace. God is with us, and because of that we can get through our difficulties."

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Church activities
become stress source

By Terri Lackey

FSSB

Baptist Press
11/9/90

NASHVILLE (BP)--Stress runs rampant in today's fast-paced society, and overtaxed church calendars perpetuate it when scheduling demands the attention of some family member nearly every night.

"Basically, churches can be guilty of overprogramming for their families and then making them feel guilty for not being there every time the doors are open," said Gary Hauk, manager of the family enrichment section of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

Sim Hassler, pastor of First Baptist Church Spring Branch in Houston, agreed.

"Something is going on at many churches every night of the week, and some expect that if you are a true follower of Jesus Christ that you will be there," he said.

Hassler said as a pastor he finds himself in the conflicting roles of supporting the frenzied schedules created by a well-intentioned staff, while quietly nodding at a family's need to stay home from functions to have time with each other.

"One of the biggest frustrations for me is that I don't expect my people to make every church event, but they think I do," Hassler said.

"I'm in a double bind of wanting to bless those events that the staff has planned but also realizing that even I can't attend all those events."

Hassler said the only way he knows to combat a member's frustration with high activity levels at church is to fight each battle one at a time.

"The best way I know to take care of it is to hear the people when they complain. I just say individually to them, 'You don't have to make all that.' And, I mirror that with my staff," said Hassler who explained he does not attend every church event.

Hauk said families' inability to cope with overscheduling can become a factor in destroying family life.

"I think churches may tear a family apart by overloading and overburdening the family," Hauk said. "Churches can contribute to the divorce rate when they overschedule, overload, overwork and overguilt. But, I don't think it has to be that way."

If staff members would take a good look at scheduling they could determine ways to better coordinate activities, Hauk said.

For example, rather than scheduling activities for children at one time, teens at another and adults at still a different time, those responsible for the church calendar could coordinate scheduling to allow the entire family to arrive at church on the same day at one time, he said.

Likewise, Hauk said, "We need to look at utilizing Sundays and Wednesdays and not tying up so many other days of the week. I think that can be healthy, although it's not always realistic."

Charlie Baker, pastor of Southern Hills Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla., said he refuses to subject his 2,000-member congregation to a constant barrage of church events.

"We give Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night to worship, and unless it is a rare exception, we don't get back together at any other time of the week," Baker said.

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"As a whole family, we try to do everything in the way of worship during these times so that they can have the rest of the week to do things with their smaller families," Baker said of his congregation.

The Tulsa pastor even goes so far as to give extremely busy families permission to stay at home on Sunday nights if that is their only opportunity for time together.

"Some men and women are on the road all during the week, and they need to spend time with their families on Sunday evenings. Now, if they just sit around watching television during that time, that's another ballgame," Baker said explaining Sunday night church should be missed only for the sake of quality family time together.

Betty Hassler, family ministry coordinator for Houston's Union Baptist Association, said church members must understand they can make choices.

"We don't want them to attend church out of compulsion or guilt," she said. "People need to discern the difference between God and church. God is included in church, but he's not restricted to church.

"God is larger than this institution," she continued. "His purposes might call me into conflict with a church event."

And that purpose, Hauk said, might be spending time with family members.

"We have to give people permission not to be there all the time," he said. "In times of extreme family pressure, families may need the church's blessing to be absent.

"I don't think Christ expected us to give up our families for our church."

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

Harrop named acting dean
at Golden Gate Seminary

N-CO
GGTS

Baptist Press
11/9/90

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Clayton K. Harrop, professor of New Testament interpretation at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., has been named as the seminary's acting dean of academic affairs.

In announcing the appointment, seminary president William O. Crews said Harrop will begin to work immediately with Robert L. Cate, who has resigned effective Jan. 31, 1991, to become the Young professor of religion at Oklahoma State University.

Harrop has been a member of the Golden Gate faculty since 1955, previously having been a pastor in Indiana and Missouri.

He is a graduate of William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., where he earned the bachelor of arts degree. He received the bachelor of divinity and doctor of philosophy degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He also has done post-doctoral studies at the University of Chicago, Cambridge University in England and the University of Gottingen in Germany.

"I am pleased the Dr. Harrop will be serving the seminary in this capacity," said Crews. "His knowledge and experience will be extremely beneficial during this transition period."

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story "Laity told to take gospel into world" dated 11/2/90, the first paragraph should read:

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Just as the laity led the early church, so must they now, said Bill O'Brien, executive director for public affairs at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

CORRECTION: In (BP) story "Porter calls for God's love in believers" dated 11/6/90, please note in the second paragraph that Porter is an employee of the Home Mission Board, not the Foreign Mission Board as reported.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

CORRECTION: In (BP) story "Medical/Dental fellowship charged to be witnesses" dated 11/7/90, please change the 14th paragraph to read:

Parks encouraged BMDF members to continue their volunteer-missions efforts in order to help persons identify the God being sought. He also affirmed the FMB's continuing commitment to appoint health-care professionals as career missionaries, suggesting that the number of requests for them, about 30, and the number actually appointed, about 10, have remained fairly constant during the last four years.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

Churches ignoring
cities, Bakke says

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press
11/9/90

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Too many evangelical churches are playing "hide and seek" in county seat towns rather than going to metropolitan areas where America's population is becoming increasingly concentrated, stressed an urban church strategist.

Ray Bakke, senior urban consultant for the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelism, noted that 51 percent of the U.S. population lives in 44 metro areas of more than one million each. Meanwhile, he said, the church is "locked into structures and patterns and often theological and ideological traditions that keep us from effectiveness."

Bakke, an American Baptist minister, addressed Southern Seminary's eighth Congress on Evangelism. The congress, which focused on "Evangelizing the City: Possibilities for the 21st Century," was sponsored by the seminary's Billy Graham Center for World Evangelism.

While the church has struggled with "cultural captivity" and inability to adapt to urbanization, Islam has become the fastest growing religion in the U.S., Bakke said. He cited a New York Times story which reported that 9 of 10 converts to Islam are black, urban youths. Bakke said that in his home city of Chicago there are 34 mosques, "most of them standing where the church used to be before it fled."

As a seminary student in the 1960s at Chicago's Northern Baptist Seminary, Bakke discovered that evangelical churches in the city had "fled and taken their inspired, inerrant Bible with them."

However, he pointed out that the Bible speaks about cities and their human need, with 1,200 texts on the cities, 400 on the poor and 300 on oppression.

Bakke also emphasized that the world is becoming increasingly more urban. In the next 10 years, he said, more than one billion babies will be born with most births occurring in Asian cities. However, he said, "80 percent of the missionaries of the evangelical church are rural in their origins or in their placement."

"It's not only an urban world, but it's an urban world in rapid motion," he said, adding that people of many nationalities are now residing in cities like Amsterdam, Paris and London: "London used to rule the world and now the world is in London."

He predicted new U.S. immigration laws "will change the demography of the United States in the next 10 or 15 years."

Ministers, he said, must develop broad world views and multi-lingual skills to adapt to the changing demographic landscape.

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In another address, Anthony Campolo, professor of sociology at Eastern College in St. David's, Pa., said "the time has come for the church to initiate the creation of a new social order" to deal with pressing problems in the inner city.

The new order, he said, should not be based on the "dominion theology" of some conservative Christians who strive to make changes by electing Christian leaders. "Jesus chooses not to change the system with power brokers on the top," he said. "He has chosen to change the world from the bottom up."

Campolo advocated that churches help rectify the pervasive unemployment in the inner city by starting small businesses: "When you go into the inner city and gather the underclass together and ask them, 'What do you need?' they are going to say, 'We need jobs.'"

The church has a history of creating institutions to meet social needs, said Campolo, noting the church's establishment of schools and hospitals.

Campolo said he is involved with a church in Philadelphia that puts illiterate high school dropouts to work in a business that salvages useable parts of discarded telephones. The employees, he said, make salaries of \$17 per hour.

"You get a kid who is doing that (and) you got a kid that can learn to read and write in a month, because he has got motivation and he's got a future," Campolo said.

Churches, he emphasized, are ideal places for small business, because they have capital, facilities and members with business expertise.

Churches should preach a gospel that makes converts and releases people from sin, Campolo said. But, he noted, Jesus defined evangelism as declaring "good news for the poor."

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Baptists targeting needs
among Romania's neglected

By Art Toalston

F-FMB

Baptist Press
11/9/90

BRAILA, Romania (BP)--Baptists are not shying away from the human misery that continues in Romania.

Romanian Baptist pastor Iosif Stefanut and Southern Baptist representative Paul Thibodeaux recently negotiated a muddy road through the cow pasture and pig pens of a rural farm in eastern Romania. Beyond the farm, they came to a hospital -- or so it was called.

The institution housed 60 men and 52 women, ranging in age from 15 to 78. All were said to be mentally handicapped. Only two days earlier, the pastor had learned of the remote facility and gained access to it.

An official guided Stefanut and Thibodeaux through dimly lit hallways, using a flashlight to let them look into the rooms. "The people were huddled either on beds or on the floor," Thibodeaux said. The facility, operated by the Romanian government, was filled with "the most deplorable conditions one could ever see," he said.

Thibodeaux quoted the pastor as saying, "We as a people, as a church, are responsible for caring for others. We're going to come here and clean this up and fix the electricity and plumbing. This is our duty."

Thibodeaux, of Oxford, Miss., told the pastor of Southern Baptists' willingness to help. The two agreed to request funds from Southern Baptist relief donations to purchase a sorely needed commercial washing machine for the institution and disinfectants and shampoo to kill lice.

Baptists in Romania and elsewhere have joined hands in numerous efforts to help Romanians of all ages who suffered the harshest forms of neglect under communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. Ceausescu's 24-year regime ended with his ouster and execution last December.

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Additionally, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board is working out details for a missionary couple to assist Romania's 1,100-plus churches and is seeking six volunteers to teach English in the country. The board also has provided funds for 20,000 Romanian Bibles and 50,000 New Testaments in conjunction with the Baptist World Alliance and the European Baptist Federation.

The world was shocked by news reports last spring of thousands of neglected Romanian orphans, many infected with AIDS from transfusions in which contaminated blood and needles were used. Even more shocking were recent reports of run-down institutions for mentally and physically handicapped children and adults, such as the one Thibodeaux visited. Stefanut, the Romanian pastor, had heard of another institution for handicapped children and youth, ages 3 to 14, but had not yet found it.

ABC's "20/20" program, in its Oct. 5 telecast, estimated more than 50 institutions for children and youth are hidden in remote areas throughout Romania. The total patient population may number from 8,000 to as many as 40,000, including hundreds who were perfectly normal as children but somehow were institutionalized as "deficient and unsalvageable," the program said.

Stefanut's congregation, Braila Baptist Church in the eastern city of Braila, is among the first in the country to begin ministering in such institutions. Meanwhile, Second Baptist Church in the western city of Oradea is the first Baptist congregation to obtain permission to open an orphanage.

Baptists worldwide have begun rallying behind a European Baptist Federation-sponsored project for sending parcels of food to Romania this winter. The government has agreed to allow 11-pound parcels of canned meat and soups, powdered milk, sugar, flour, oil, rice, soaps, aspirin and related items from overseas churches to be mailed to Romanian Baptist churches without customs fees.

One of the earliest efforts to meet human need in the name of Christ after Ceausescu's fall from power involved a \$1 million allocation from Southern Baptists' relief offerings. The funds purchased seed and related supplies for needy farmers in the Bacau region in easternmost Romania.

Two agricultural officials from the region wrote a letter of appreciation to Thibodeaux, who coordinated the project last spring. At first "we were not able to believe in your good intentions, owing first of all to the terror ... we were subject to for many years," the officials said. But when the aid arrived "so promptly," it caused them to "really believe" in Southern Baptists' humanitarian concern.

Additional Southern Baptist projects will emerge during the coming months, Thibodeaux said, noting that six Southern Baptist workers are in eastern Romania engaging in hands-on ministry and exploring needs Southern Baptists may be able to meet.

Much of Southern Baptists' relief work is in eastern Romania. "It is by far the most economically depressed area of the country," Thibodeaux said. "It is also one of the areas where the fewest evangelical churches are located" and is more steeped in Romanian Orthodox traditions.

It also is a region that has received much less aid from the West, Thibodeaux said. It is situated on the eastern side of the Carpathian Mountains and roads leading there are in poor condition.

Western Romania, meanwhile, is somewhat akin to the U.S. Bible Belt, Thibodeaux said. Most of Romania's Baptist churches and numerous other evangelical congregations meet in villages there. "After the revolution, a lot of aid came into Romania," Thibodeaux said, "but folks quite often went to the easier places to reach in western Romania, where they had more church contacts and more people speak English."

Animal husbandry specialists Charlie and Anne Pearson, Southern Baptist volunteers from Frisco, Texas, are studying needs related to farm animals in the Bacau region.

High-protein cattle food already has emerged as a critical need, Thibodeaux said. Dairy cattle in the Bacau region, he said, are so malnourished that they produce only one or two liters of milk a day, compared to 28 liters in Germany and 24 in Austria. Current drought conditions in the region threaten to cut dairy cattle output even further.

Short-term medical work and exploration of ministry opportunities in the Bacau region are being done by Bill Wilkerson, a Southern Baptist physician from Henderson, Texas, and his wife, Melba, a nurse, as well as two other Southern Baptist nurses, Teresa Smith of Mud Creek, Ala., and Janna Williams of Chicago. The latter two transferred to Romania from Yemen, where they had been working at a Baptist hospital until the Middle East crisis erupted.

Smith and Williams already have reported the need for a volunteer kidney specialist to spend up to a month in Romania helping medical personnel make better use of dialysis equipment at a hospital in Bacau and perhaps elsewhere in the country.

Foreign Mission Board human needs ministries in Romania have stirred interest not only among Southern Baptists but other Christians as well. Several Presbyterian churches in the Birmingham, Ala., area have inquired about channeling funds through the board to minister to Romanian children.

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Graham offers Hong Kong
no advice on 1997 takeover

By Kathie Chute

N- FMB

Baptist Press
11/9/90

HONG KONG (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham said he would not advise people in Hong Kong during his November crusade there about what to do when China reclaims the British colony in 1997.

In a press conference before the Nov. 14-18 crusade, Graham also said he would not tell churches or Christians who want to survive under Chinese communist rule what preparations they should make.

"That is up to the individual church and up to the individual person before God," Graham said. "It would be very presumptuous of me to tell anyone what they should do. Each individual should ask God's will and do whatever he shows you to do. The Bible shows us many people that lived through a transition period. It can be a tremendous opportunity for witness and growth."

Journalists at the press conference persistently tried to pin Graham down on his opinions about Hong Kong's future, developments in Europe and the Middle East and advice he might give to world leaders.

"It is not my intention to become involved in political issues or questions while I am here," he said repeatedly. "My calling instead is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ -- a message which transcends every political or social or economic system, because it speaks to the deepest needs of the human heart."

Jesus lived in days of great political upheaval, Graham pointed out. Yet "not one word did Jesus say about Rome. Not one word did the Apostle Paul say about Rome. They felt there was a greater issue. That's why Jesus died on the cross."

Graham's wife, Ruth, did not accompany her husband to Asia because of back surgery. The daughter of a missionary surgeon, Mrs. Graham grew up in China and "spoke Mandarin before she did English," Graham said. She went to America at age 17 and has spent her life "studying and loving China."

Graham admitted he had received a "very good briefing" from Mrs. Graham about the situation in Hong Kong, "so I am not entirely ignorant of some of the problems that you face as you look at 1997.

"In my view," he added, "the people of Hong Kong have a great opportunity and a tremendous responsibility to show to the world through this transition something about peace and progress."

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The Hong Kong Billy Graham Crusade was predicted to be Graham's largest single outreach effort in more than 40 years of international ministry. Television coverage of crusade meetings at Hong Kong Stadium were scheduled to be carried by satellite and video extension to 30 countries throughout Asia and the Pacific region. Five program editions to be translated into 45 languages could reach an estimated audience of 100 million people for each program.

More than 25 million people were expected to attend 70,000 satellite and video crusades, organized by more than 125,000 churches in these countries. Each crusade has been prepared as if Graham were coming personally, with about 400,000 counselors trained and 10 million pieces of follow-up literature printed in 30 languages.

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Parks asks world's Baptists
to pray for Mideast crisis

By Art Toalston

N-FMB

Baptist Press
11/9/90

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A spiritual dimension must be added to efforts to resolve the Middle East crisis, according to a Southern Baptist leader who is urging Baptists worldwide to make Dec. 9 a day of prayer for the region.

R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, said, "It is urgent and appropriate to focus worldwide prayer on this turbulent part of the world," where Saddam Hussein's Iraq has seized neighboring Kuwait, prompting a military face-off between Iraqi troops and international forces massed in Saudi Arabia.

"Increasing threats of war and continuing violence," Parks stated, "are beyond human solution." He said he realizes many Baptists already are praying individually, but added: "I trust many more will be praying."

In Southern Baptist life, Dec. 9 is the concluding day in this year's Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions. And the Middle East is this year's focus for foreign mission studies in Southern Baptist churches. Parks said the region was selected several years ago -- "providentially perhaps" -- for the annual season of study and prayer as well as giving to the annual Christmas offering for foreign missions.

"During the approaching celebration of the birth of the Prince of Peace, let us pray that the people of the Middle East will see him as the only way to spiritual and temporal peace," Parks said in announcing his call to prayer.

Parks also listed 10 specific petitions to God regarding the Middle east. He urged Baptists to pray for:

- Jesus to be recognized as Savior and Lord.
- God's purposes to be accomplished through the crisis and chaos.
- Saddam Hussein to seek true peace.
- President Bush and other leaders to have wisdom beyond themselves and to make choices God desires.
- Southern Baptist representative Maurice Graham (still stranded in Kuwait) and other hostages to be released.
- Inner peace and spiritual victory for Christians and missionaries in the region as a strong testimony to others.
- Safety for America's servicemen in the Middle East, and clarity of witness by Christians among U.S. forces.
- Peace between Arab and Jew.
- Full and free opportunity to proclaim the gospel.
- Revival among Christians in the Middle East.

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Maurice Graham, of Shelbyville, Tenn., is among a handful of Americans still at the beleaguered U.S. Embassy in Kuwait. About 1,000 Americans remain in Kuwait and Iraq. Graham's wife, Laurie, and their 13- and 10-year-old sons were permitted to leave Kuwait in September. The Grahams, Southern Baptists' first workers in Kuwait, had been in the country less than three months when Iraqi troops stormed into the country Aug. 2.

"Diplomacy is important," Parks said in an interview, but at this point no man-made solution is on the horizon. World powers continue to resort to war to resolve their irreconcilable differences, he said.

"It is tragic that we haven't progressed beyond that," he observed. "Destructive power is the least desirable kind of power. I feel there is a spiritual dimension that we as Christians believe in that can aid world leaders in envisioning a solution. What we really need is the intervention of God."

History recorded in the Bible and ever since shows that "the concentration of the prayers of God's people seems to have an impact," Parks said. "Prayer is not something you can put in a test tube or measure or weigh. But I think a concentration of more people praying enables the Lord to move in a more powerful way -- simply because he has chosen to work that way. He has taught us that he does things because of our prayers that would not happen otherwise. Prayer is one of the ways he enables us to participate in the way he works in the world."

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Baptists may experience
realignment, says Campolo

By Pat Cole

F-10
(SBTS)

Baptist Press
11/9/90

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--A realignment of denominational affiliations may be in the offering for Baptist churches in the United States during the next century, predicted an American Baptist sociologist.

Anthony Campolo, professor of sociology at Eastern College in St. David's, Pa., said in an interview that the new alignments will probably revolve around issues of secular politics rather than theology.

"There are those who for theological reasons come out as politically conservative," he said. "There are those who for theological reasons who come out as politically liberal. Those concerns will become focal points."

Campolo, an ordained minister, speaker and author, made his observations at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he addressed the Louisville, Ky., school's eighth Congress on Evangelism.

Campolo said both camps will include "liberals, moderates and fundamentalists," but, he added, that "the way their theologies work themselves out in social realities" will make the groups significantly different.

He pointed out that slavery, a primary reason for the 1845 schism between Baptists in the North and South, is no longer an issue. "There are new dividing factors at work in the world," he said. "Why not realign churches according to these new affinities?"

One group of Baptists may be "much more counter cultural oriented" and stress commitment to the peace movement and radical discipleship, he said, noting these churches may appear to "be more Anabaptist than Baptist." The other group "will be much more integrated in the dominant social systems," he said.

Social concerns and environmental issues will top the agenda of one group, while the other will emphasize making converts, he said: "Both of these are legitimate goals, but I think there will be a polarization in terms of political social interests."

As an interim solution, Campolo suggested disaffected churches in the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. and the Southern Baptist Convention consider dual alignment. "There are significant numbers of American Baptist churches in the North that would be much happier as Southern Baptist churches," he said. "There are churches all over the South that would be much happier as American Baptist churches."

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Dual alignment would allay ministers' concerns about leaving their denominational annuity programs, he said. However, he said he is not sure mechanisms are in place for massive numbers of churches to dually align.

Campolo, who described himself as a "fundamentalist theologically" but a "radical socially," said he first detected unrest among Baptists in America in the early 1970s while doing research for a book on the ABC.

In Campolo's study, Baptists across the U.S. were interviewed with the help of the national polling firm Roper Associates. Campolo said he found many Southern Baptists who were "fed up with the SBC" because the denomination was "not concerned about social issues."

Some American Baptists, however, said their denomination did not "preach the gospel" and should be more concerned with evangelistic enterprises, he said.

Campolo said the study led him to conclude in 1972 the SBC would split around the year 2000.

The SBC controversy comes partially from "the luxury of being big," he said, noting that American Baptist churches in the North are much less dominant than Southern Baptist churches in the South.

"When there are so few of you, you tend to ignore minor differences," he said. "Down here there are so many of you the only thing there is to distinguish yourselves one from another are minor differences."

The study did not find Southern Baptists concerned about a liberal drift in the denomination, Campolo said: "I think in the '70s loyalty to the denomination was so great in the South that the Southern Baptist Convention spoke with an air of papal authority. Nobody questioned it that I knew of."

Campolo said one Southern Baptist told him he was going to the North to start a church "because God has chosen the SBC to be his special instrument in evangelism in the last days." While not all Southern Baptists articulated the feeling, others were in agreement, he said: "There was a messianic dimension to it, a sense that we were growing and we were growing for one reason -- we're preaching the gospel."

However, he noted "the great big giant stopped growing," causing introspection among Southern Baptists. Many Southern Baptists concluded they "must have drifted away from the formula, but nobody raised the other question -- maybe the formula doesn't work anymore?" said Campolo.

Southern Baptists have also lost ground to charismatic churches in many Southern cities, he said. Many people prefer the "spontaneous excitement of the charismatic movement to the deadness of the fundamentalist traditionalism," he concluded.

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Accreditation agencies
to visit Southern Seminary

By David R. Wilkinson

F-60
(SBTS)

Baptist Press
11/9/90

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Staff members from two accrediting agencies will visit Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Nov. 18-19 to investigate reports related to actions by the school's board of trustees at its meetings in September and April.

The information-gathering visit by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was requested by the ATS Commission on Accrediting.

Southern Seminary is accredited by both bodies.

According to a letter sent to Provost and then Acting President G. Willis Bennett, ATS staff was asked "to investigate reports which have come to its attention regarding recent actions of the (seminary's) Board of Trustees ... and which may intrude on the proper functions of administration and faculty."

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ATS staff was asked to submit a report on its findings to the commission at its January 1991 meeting.

The letter was sent to Bennett in the absence of President Roy L. Honeycutt who has since returned to office following recuperation from heart bypass surgery in July.

Honeycutt acknowledged that ATS and SACS representatives plan to confer with him, Bennett, faculty representatives and two trustees. He said he preferred not to comment about specific concerns or possible outcomes of the visit, noting "such speculation would be inappropriate."

According to ATS documents, a decision by the Commission on Accrediting to visit a member school for purposes of "information" is "based on information which may lead the commission to conclude that reevaluation is advisable; or any indication that the quality of a school's programs may have been adversely affected."

The visit to the Louisville, Ky., campus comes in the wake of a controversial trustee decision in September to add the 1987 Southern Baptist Peace Committee report as a guideline for hiring, promoting and granting tenure to faculty.

The seminary's faculty Nov. 1 unanimously adopted a statement urging trustees to rescind their action and requesting an opportunity to discuss their concerns with a representative group from the 63-member board.

The faculty response claimed the trustee decision creates "significant problems" in the faculty's relationship with the board, "misuses" the Peace Committee report and "introduce ambiguity and confusion" into the seminary's instructional process.

Earlier, national officers of the seminary's alumni association also urged trustees to rescind their action.

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UMHB announces
new president

F-10 (Mary Hardin
- Baylor) Baptist Press
11/9/90

BELTON, Texas (BP)--Jerry G. Bawcom has been selected as the 21st president of the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, according to the school's board of trustees.

Bawcom will join UMHB Feb. 1, 1991 as president-elect and assume the position of president and chief executive officer Aug. 1, 1991.

Bawcom has been president of Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth since May 1984. He has been at the university since 1969 and previously was interim president, vice president for administration, vice president for student life and dean of students.

"My lifelong goal has been to serve in one of our Baptist universities," said Bawcom. "I love this work and I feel called to this university just as a preacher would feel called and I have been as prayerful as you have been," he said to the UMHB trustees.

"I am looking forward to a long and strong tie with the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor and close ties with students because students are the reason we are here," he added.

Bawcom has a bachelor of science in secondary education and a master of education from Texas Tech. His Ph.D. is in higher education administration from the University of North Texas.

Bawcom and his wife, Vicky, have one daughter, Amy, a junior at Texas Wesleyan University.

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