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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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91-135

'Crossover India' volunteer
project planned in 1992-93

By Marty Croll

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptists will send volunteers from throughout the denomination to India for their 1992-93 "Cross Overseas" evangelism project.

Southern Baptist Convention President Morris Chapman is urging churches nationwide to send teams of pastors and lay people to help Indian Baptists and to mark the 200th anniversary of missionary William Carey's arrival in India.

"Crossover India" is the second in a series of "Cross Overseas" projects emphasizing participation from all parts of the SBC in a yearly crusade overseas. It parallels the "Cross Over America" campaign Chapman launched in conjunction with the SBC Home Mission Board.

During 1992, volunteers will lead regional leadership conferences to strengthen churches and prepare Indian Baptists for evangelism and growth crusades in 1993. The crusades are scheduled in conjunction with a large two-day celebration event to occur in a major Indian city.

"This seems to be such an appropriate time for us to go to India," said Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas. "I have had the privilege of visiting with Baptist brothers from India, and I know they really have a heart to win their nation to Christ. I know they will rejoice in our coming and welcome us with open arms."

Chapman has appointed John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church in Houston, and Charles Carter, pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., to help enlist Southern Baptists for the effort. "These two men have a vision for world missions," Chapman said. "I believe they will give a clear call for volunteers to go to India and participate in this strategic world mission opportunity."

Because of William Carey's impact, the celebration likely will receive attention not only from Christians but also from others throughout India. Carey, the first modern-day missionary, left for India in 1792 from his home in England after helping form a missionary society. In India he ran the first printing press, translated and taught literacy in 17 languages and did extensive botanical work.

About 80 percent of the people of India practice Hinduism; another 11 percent are Muslims. But Christians, at 2.6 percent, have remained a steady force there. Many mission agencies work there and also will celebrate the Carey bicentennial.

Southern Baptists work with separate Baptist unions and associations in many Indian regions through itinerant missionaries who live outside India but visit periodically to offer their services and participate in training conferences.

The Carey celebration is expected to help Baptists gain a clearer identity among Indians and to create new evangelistic opportunities. It also will help Baptists better understand their distinctives and develop greater commitment to evangelism and missions, said Clyde Meador. Meador directs the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's itinerant missionary program in southern Asia.

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The project will benefit Southern Baptists, also, Chapman believes. "No doubt there will be an opportunity to lead thousands to Christ, but the experience will profoundly change the volunteers who participate," he said. "I'm convinced there's no better way to develop a heart for missions than to personally participate in it."

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Wife of former Southwestern
Seminary president dies

Baptist Press
9/10/91

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Floy Williams Ferguson, wife of the fourth president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, died Sept. 9 in Marshall, Texas. She was 93.

Memorial services for Ferguson will be Sept. 12 on the seminary campus with Southwestern President Russell Dilday presiding.

Ferguson was married to J. Howard Williams who was president of the seminary from 1953 until his death in 1958. He was also executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas on two occasions, from 1931-36 and 1945-53.

Following her husband's death, she married Ted Ferguson of Amarillo, Texas, a longtime friend of the family. He preceded her in death in 1988.

Ferguson was born Jan. 10, 1898 in Prattsville, Ark., and graduated from Central College in Conway, Ark., in 1919. She received the bachelor of missionary training degree from Southwestern Seminary in 1921 and returned to the seminary to earn the master of religious education degree in 1955. In 1943 she delivered the seminary's commencement address at the request of President L.R. Scarborough.

Southwestern honored Ferguson in 1984 with the Distinguished Alumna Award. She and her second husband also received the B.H. Carroll Award from the seminary in recognition for their significant contributions to the school.

She is survived by five children: Martha Sandford, Carolyn Mason, J. Howard Williams Jr., Kelly Dan Williams and Floy Woodruff. Also surviving is her sister, Carolyn Jackson; 19 grandchildren, 36 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

The family has asked memorials be made to Floy Williams Ferguson Memorial Fund, which is used for student ministers' wives at Southwestern Seminary.

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Clarke College challenges
accrediting agency action

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9/10/91

NEWTON, Miss. (BP)--Clarke College has filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court against the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools challenging its April 4 decision to withdraw Clarke's accredited status.

SACS based its decision on charges Clarke failed to comply with standards regarding finances and planning. Withdrawal of accreditation resulted in the termination of all federal financial assistance for the college and its students.

Clarke College shares a board of trustees with Mississippi College. Both schools operate under the auspices of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Clarke is, however, a separate institution in terms of identity.

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In its lawsuit, Clarke College seeks a finding SACS acted improperly and in violation of the law in withdrawing Clarke's accreditation. Clarke asserts during the withdrawal process, SACS violated its own policies and procedures and failed to comply with constitutional guarantees of due process. Clarke also asserts SACS decision was arbitrary, unreasonable, and not supported by substantial evidence.

Clarke has also asked the court to issue an injunction which would reinstitute accredited status pending a complete and proper rehearing before SACS which is consistent with its legal rights, according to documents filed in the Southern District Court of Mississippi, Eastern Division.

Clarke filed suit, school officials said, to protect the interests of its student body, which numbered nearly 200 last year. Without the SACS accreditation, the students are left in limbo.

"The unjustified withdrawal of Clarke's accreditation coupled with the automatic termination of all federal educational benefits for Clarke students has deprived some students of the means to pursue or complete their education," said James Read, the college's academic dean.

Clarke College, founded in 1907, is a junior college located in Newton, Miss., which offers the associate of arts degree. Last year, one-third of Clarke's students intended to pursue careers as Christian ministers.

On July 2 the city of Newton passed a resolution saying it "wholeheartedly support(s) Clarke College in its efforts to continue its service as an educational institution."

Success in its lawsuit could lead to reinstatement of Clarke's accreditation and resumption of federal assistance. School officials said Clarke would continue to hold classes on its Newton campus and has established temporary means to help its students finance their education pending resolution of the suit.

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Lanny Hall installed as 13th
president of Hardin-Simmons

By Charles Richardson

Baptist Press
9/10/91

ABILENE, Texas (BP)--Lanny Hall was installed formally as 13th president of Hardin-Simmons University, saying, "My prayer today is: Our purpose, plan and performance will be guided by the will of our Father."

The day began with an inaugural prayer service in Logsdon Chapel, with prayers for the new HSU leader.

In his final remarks, Hall, who succeeded Jess C. Fletcher as president June 1, called for God's blessings on HSU and those connected with the institution.

Delegates from 80 colleges, universities and other organizations attended the inaugural program in Behrens Chapel and heard the new president call for purpose, planning, performance and prayer.

"An inauguration is a time for new beginnings and a time for reexamination of the purpose for which the institution exists," said Hall.

Stressing the importance of HSU's commitment in its 100 years of existence to Christian education, the new leader said, "I would only underscore the connection between quality education and the Christian experience. As teachers and learners, may we ever cling to that connection."

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In his call to planning, Hall declared, "As we celebrate this day, let us build a blueprint for tomorrow ... I would issue the call today for a strategic plan to be developed this year to move us through the first decade of our second century."

In his call to performance, the president said it is "not enough" to declare a commitment to excellence. "We must document how that commitment is transformed into achievement."

He urged students to give their best efforts to their academic experience, set goals and measure progress.

Speaking to the faculty and staff, the president also encouraged them to establish personal and professional goals and "let us measure our progress in order that we might maximize our effectiveness as well as our efficiency."

Three former presidents of HSU, including Fletcher, who is now chancellor; James H. Landes of Waco, who served the institution from 1963 to 1966; and Elwin L. Skiles of Abilene, who served from 1966 to 1977 assisted in the investiture of Hall as chief executive.

Hall came to HSU from Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas, where he was president for two and one half years.

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Baptists' prayers, cooperative efforts
bring life-giving help to Mexican boy

By Ken Camp & Orville Scott

Baptist Press
9/10/91

DALLAS (BP)--Four months ago, doctors wondered if Abdiel Castro de Leon would live to see his ninth birthday. Today, the boy's prognosis is good, thanks to the prayers of Texas Baptists and the efforts of one Mission Service Corps couple from northeast Texas.

Gerald and Ora Lee Tomes, Mission Service Corps volunteers with Texas Baptist River Ministry and members of First Baptist Church of Paris, Texas, discovered the eight-year-old last January while working with a medical clinic at Las Flores de la Progreso in northern Mexico.

Examinations revealed the child was born with an abnormally short colon, and that led to other health problems including anemia and various infections.

Tomes asked several churches to add Abdiel to their prayer lists, asking God to provide the right doctor and hospital to meet the boy's needs.

Prayers were answered when a physician in Tomes' home church contacted the chief of pediatric surgery at Baylor University Medical Center, who volunteered his services to perform the necessary operations.

Air transportation to Dallas was provided for Abdiel and his mother by the Texas Baptist River Ministry.

Abdiel has undergone three major operations since early July, and he is scheduled to return home in late September. Between surgeries and during recovery, he and his mother have lived with the Tomes family.

Julie Robbins, bilingual secretary in the River Ministry department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, has been translator for attending physicians.

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"The Lord is the one who has done all this. It is an answer to prayer," Tomes said. "We believe God put us at the medical clinic in Mexico that day specifically for this purpose."

Elmin Howell, director of River Ministry, said, "Miracles like this happen when all our Baptist family works together under the leadership of Christ. I believe Abdiel's family and village will be reached for Christ through our service to one suffering child and his family.

"When he returns to his village, people are going to be amazed at what's happened to him. They can't believe he's still alive."

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Healthy relationships require
desire to probe, correct past

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press
9/10/91

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Choosing healthy relationships requires emotional and mental stability and the desire to face up to and correct problems from the past, a health care worker said during a Single Adult Labor Day conference.

Leading a seminar on "Love is a Choice -- Understanding Codependency," Sandra Jo Wilson, a registered nurse in the psychiatric and substance abuse units at Providence Hospital in Washington, said, "We must learn to love ourselves in order to be healthy individuals."

Wilson led the seminar at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center where more than 2,500 single adults participated in the Labor Day conference. Attendance at the Ridgecrest conference and simultaneous gatherings in San Diego, St. Louis, and Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center topped 5,000.

The terms codependency and dysfunctional are current psychological buzzwords, noted Wilson, who said both phrases are applicable in some degree to every person in the world.

"We all are dysfunctional in some way. All of us have had situations that molded our adulthood and which are unhealthy," said Wilson. "We all have problems."

Every person is responsible for his or her own well-being, Wilson said.

People learn certain boundaries and values from their parents beginning at birth, and unhealthy lessons tend to manifest themselves in adulthood, she said.

Infants up to age one learn trust and mistrust values, Wilson said. "This is where nurturing starts."

She said babies who do not have their needs consistently met learn to mistrust. "This is the age where hope is learned. Hope is trust."

Children in the "terrible twos" stage begin to learn physical boundaries. Those children not taught boundaries learn in adulthood to trespass into the personal, mental and emotional space of others.

At age five, children learn independence and to begin taking responsibility for their actions, she said. From ages six to 11, they are learning to cooperate, compete and compromise.

In the next few years, children learn to socialize and they become more aware of others. From 16 years up, "they are learning about intimacy, love and relationships and experiencing human closeness," she said.

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Love can be defined in many ways, Wilson said, but healthy love begins with romance or passion, moves to the instinctual (biological or sexual) stage and advances into commitment.

"Commitment is a relationship with another individual for the purpose of growth leading to intimacy," she said.

But, Wilson said, love may go awry when one person is extremely dysfunctional or codependent.

"Codependency is the dependency of one person on another person's behavior to the point they want control of (the other person's) behavior," Wilson said. "Most of the time this is not intentional. It is done below awareness."

Control issues such as these occur "because of the way we as children learn to function.

"In codependency our boundaries are weak," said Wilson, who defined boundaries as "spaces in our lives that we need to keep our own identity. When our boundaries are weak, we lose some of our identity."

A codependent person has boundaries, Wilson explained, "but they are weak," while an adult child of an alcoholic "has few boundaries."

Someone who does not get professional help for codependency will have a difficult time committing to a healthy relationship, she said.

"A codependent person is so wrapped up in trying to please the other person that, after a while, the healthiest person will pull away and say, 'I've had enough,' and move away," Wilson said.

"Relationships are like a see-saw," Wilson said. "But they have to have more positiveness than negativeness if they are going to survive. If not, we begin to look for an escape."

People who have problems sustaining healthy relationships should see a professional Christian counselor, suggested Wilson.

"First, we have to love ourselves to be a healthy individual," she said. "In order to love ourselves, we have to love God. In order to love God, we have to love other men and in order to love other men, we need to love both (God and ourselves)."

Single Adult Labor Day conferences are sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

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Non-custodial parents should
make life easier for children

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press
9/10/91

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Single parents who do not have custody of their children must work doubly hard at making life easier and healthier for them.

"The reason you are here is because you care about your children and want them to be whole and happy," Karen McGuire, group manager of age level editorial work at Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, told about 20 single adults attending a seminar on non-custodial parenting.

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McGuire, who said she has been both a custodial and non-custodial single parent, warned: "Sometimes we send a message to our children that the other parent is less than lovable. It is important for them to know that even though the marriage didn't work out, the children are loved."

Show respect for the primary provider (custodial parent), especially if he or she remarries, said McGuire. The non-custodial parent should not let jealousy ruin the relationship between the other parent, the new spouse and the child.

Encourage good communication, McGuire urged.

"Sometimes this is difficult, but we often have to put aside our feelings," she said. "Learn to recognize the other person as a person of worth and value in God's eyes. Pray for them. You cannot long hate someone you pray for."

"Don't treat your children as guests when they come to visit," she continued. "Allow life to go on as usual. Do laundry, grocery shop, just like it happens when they live with the other parent."

The non-custodial parent should make time to be alone with each child "on a regular basis to help know who they are," McGuire said.

The parent should avoid the temptation to ask what is going on at home where they live, she said. "And never ask your children to convey an important message to your former spouse."

Both custodial and non-custodial parents should encourage the family to stay in touch, she said. "There are two sets of grandparents and aunts, uncles and cousins on both sides."

McGuire warned non-custodial parents not to burden the children with financial matters. "Children don't need to know all the gory details about your finances. Children are children; they are not your friends."

Non-custodial parents should consistently attend church with their children when they come for a visit, she said.

"Look to the future. Set some goals for your life. Look forward to a positive future with your children," said McGuire. "Forgive and move on."

"It is critical that forgiveness happens in each of our lives. If we do not forgive, our children will never grow up to be whole and healthy people," said McGuire.

More than 5,000 single adults attended simultaneous Labor Day Weekend conferences at Ridgecrest, Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center, San Diego, and St. Louis. The conferences were sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

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Southwestern Seminary president
urges students to be persistent

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9/10/91

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Southwestern Seminary President Russell Dilday exhorted students to remember the biblical quality of persistence as they begin their academic studies for the fall semester.

Speaking in the opening chapel service of the 1991-92 school year, Dilday said despite the diverse callings and ministries represented in Southwestern's student body, God's will has united the students under one purpose: to study, train and equip themselves for the tasks God has given them.

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"Sometimes students are afraid of knowledge," he said. "They have the strange understanding that learning will dilute spiritual power somehow, that scholarship will somehow weaken their faith or assuage their evangelistic zeal. Nothing could be further from the truth," he said.

"Some of the most effective Christian ministers in history have been those who were persons of great learning," he said.

He cited the apostle Paul as an example of a person gifted with a brilliant mind who subjected himself to the discipline of a rabbinical education.

Dilday also encouraged the students to remain persistent in their dedication to the local church. He pointed out the seminary does not duplicate the programs of the local church, but rather expects students to join and be active in those programs while in seminary.

He closed by telling the students to be persistent in discipleship. Reading from I Corinthians 9:24-27, Dilday said it seemed inconceivable the apostle Paul would be in any danger of being "disqualified" for moral misconduct.

"But Paul is reminding us here of his and our humanity," Dilday said. "We need to remember that we who handle sacred things must constantly remember we are simply instruments. We are frail human beings so prone to failure ... so Paul says, 'I discipline my body lest when I preach to others I be disqualified,' and so should you."

Dilday is beginning his 14th year as president of Southwestern Seminary.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary

Ministers must meet needs
of hurting people: Crews

By Cameron Crabtree

Baptist Press
9/10/91

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Ministers must meet the needs of hurting people to succeed as leaders, said Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary President William O. Crews Jr.

"If you're going to be a leader, something has to happen inside of you," Crews told students in a Sept. 4 convocation opening the fall semester. The first assignment of seminary students is to listen to people who are hurting and minister to them, he added.

Golden Gate Seminary's sixth president used Old Testament prophet Nehemiah as an example of people-oriented leadership: "He began being a leader by listening. Too much leadership begins today not by a listening ear, but by an open mouth."

Hurting people are all around, Crews noted, and church leaders must be attentive if they are to minister to others. Golden Gate Seminary boasts a location adjacent to San Francisco, one of the nation's largest, most diverse urban centers.

"In the places where you minister, listening to the hurts of people may not be heard in the words that are said but by the way they are said," stated the former pastor of churches in Texas, Washington, Oregon and California.

Besides listening to people, true leaders pray, confess sin and concentrate on God's will, Crews said.

"If we will fix our eyes on God then he will become bigger than any problem you will face," Crews told students. "But I warn you, if you focus on your problems first then God will likely not have a chance to get involved in solving your problems at all."

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Comfort and prominence should not be of concern to ministers, Crews said. In fact, he cautioned, sometimes "not everybody is going to like what you do."

But the Bible lays out all the promises needed for effective ministry, Crews pointed out: "Your life and your ministry will be exciting if you spend it claiming the promises God has already given to you and to me to serve him."

"Listen, pray, concentrate on God and claim his promises, and your first assignment and every assignment will be blessed by God," he concluded.

Golden Gate Seminary is the only SBC agency in the western United States.

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Jail doesn't bar David
Umfreville from ministry

By Matthew Brady

Baptist Press
9/10/91

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--David Umfreville is doing his best to get students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary behind bars.

And if he succeeds, the 44-year-old outreach pastor of prisons, jails and juveniles for First Baptist Church of Dallas, believes the students will be as captivated as he is.

Ten years and 10,000 saved souls into his jail ministry, Umfreville is still trying to get the word out -- jails and prisons are not only ripe for harvest, they are full of Christians in need of discipleship.

Umfreville said he finds very few pastors or church members who know about the needs in prisons.

"What happens is, somebody ends up in prison or jail and they're just kind of lost out there in a field or ocean of people," he said. "Many times nobody knows about it, or the family won't tell anybody because they're embarrassed."

In his efforts to remedy the situation, Umfreville helped establish the Inmate Discippler Fellowship program at Southwestern Seminary.

Bill Vinson, associate director of the seminary's continuing education department and supervisor of the IDF program, said it is designed for the mature Christian inmate who feels called to ministry, has a high school diploma and passes a vigorous screening process.

New converts are encouraged to join the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board discipleship program. More mature Christian inmates are disciplined through the MasterLife program offered by Texas Baptist Men.

Nearly 130 inmates are being disciplined through IDF, and twice that many have requested the program, Umfreville said.

Umfreville also encourages growing Christians with the 33 Christian libraries he has established in prisons throughout Texas. Listeners of First Baptist's KCBI radio station donated more than 33,000 books, and Umfreville said more keep coming in.

"I feel like a revolving door for Christian books," he said. "It's just an amazing thing the need for Christian books in these Texas prisons."

But the books and programs can't keep up with the booming prison industry. With six prisons under construction, Umfreville said Texas soon will have a prison population of 60,000 inmates. As for the jail population, he said over 100,000 inmates will pass through the Dallas County Jail system this year. The numbers are overwhelming, but so is the response to the gospel.

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"These men are stripped of all dignity, family, money, friends. They are just stripped of everything and anything that they've ever known," Umfreville said. "And now, maybe for the first time in their lives, they are ready to turn their hearts and lives to God."

Umfreville went into full-time ministry from a successful sales position with Carborundum Corporation. He won four national sales contests in his eight years with the company, but it was his work with the Gideons that excited Umfreville the most.

Handing out Bibles and sharing the gospel was an "incredible experience," he said. "I knew this was what I wanted to do the rest of my life."

He quit his job and enrolled at Criswell Bible College in 1978, while at the same time accepting a part-time position with First Baptist of Dallas. In 1983 he enrolled at Southwestern and graduated with a master of arts degree in religious education.

One of Umfreville's goals is to involve more seminary students in prison evangelism. In addition to the IDF program, he has ordered over \$500 worth of books to establish a collection of prison, jail and juvenile research material at Southwestern. His ultimate goal is to establish a chair of prison evangelism.

"Prison doesn't change anybody," Umfreville said. "Only Jesus Christ can change the heart of an inmate so when he gets out, he will be different from what he went in as."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary

Southwestern professor says Baptists
losing distinctive principles

By Matthew Brady

Baptist Press
9/10/91

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Three distinctive characteristics of Baptist belief are in danger of extinction, a Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary professor warned in a chapel address Sept. 4.

Believers' baptism by immersion, religious freedom for all human beings and cooperative missions are becoming "endangered Baptist beliefs," said James Leo Garrett, distinguished professor of theology at the seminary.

Believers' baptism by immersion "has through the centuries set apart or differentiated Baptists from other bodies of Christians," Garrett said. "But this belief is being threatened today by the increasing practice, especially among Southern Baptists, of baptizing into full church membership preschool age or extremely young children."

In 1970 Southern Baptist churches baptized 1,200 children ages five and under, Garrett said. In 1989, more than 3,000 children ages five and under were baptized "when the total number of baptisms was actually fewer" than in 1970, he said.

Believer's baptism has also been weakened by the failure of Baptist churches to provide instruction or discipleship training for the newly baptized and by churches which are accommodating infant baptism and forms other than immersion, he said.

When Baptists forsake believer's baptism, "the once-for-all character of true baptism is lost, and the demarcation between unbelief and faith, between church and world, between Christian lifestyle and pagan, between Christ and culture is blurred," he said.

Religious freedom for all human beings is another belief which has been "held, enunciated and defended by Baptists from the earliest times," Garrett said, but it is now facing extinction among Baptists.

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Religious freedom is being jeopardized by "majoritarian Baptists" who seek or sanction special civil privileges for particular religious groups and their members and who "speak or write disparagingly of the cherished principle of universal religious freedom," Garrett said.

"Affirming and practicing universal religious freedom is not all that it means to be a Baptist Christian, but it is highly questionable as to whether one can rightly be called a Baptist who does not hold to and defend such," he said.

Cooperative missions was not held or practiced at first by early Baptists until William Carey went to India in 1793, Garrett said. Baptists then began using the society method to "evangelize beyond the borders of the old Christendom," he said.

The belief in cooperative missions later served as the "principal catalyst for bringing into existence a structured Baptist denomination," Garrett said. When Southern Baptists established the Cooperative Program in 1925, the denomination became "the largest single international missions sending agency in world Protestantism," he said.

"But this belief and practice among Southern Baptists is now simultaneously being seriously threatened from two directions -- from those who would manipulate and control the agencies of the cooperative mission enterprise to the disenfranchisement and exclusion of their fellow believers, and from those who would withdraw from the cooperative mission enterprise in impatient, despairing and schismatic abandon," he said.

Garrett closed his chapel address by challenging Southwestern students to "uphold these Baptist distinctives."

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