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91-154

**Hinson's colleagues respond  
to FMB trustees' action**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt and the seminary's faculty association have released separate statements concerning Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees' decision to defund the board's contribution to the operating budget of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

The trustees' action was due, in part, to the European seminary's decision to allow Glenn Hinson, a church history professor at Southern Seminary, to teach there during his sabbatical.

Following is the statement released Oct. 10, 1991, by Honeycutt.

"I am shocked by the news of the action of the Board of Trustees of the Foreign Mission Board to defund the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon and in the process to malign the reputation of a renowned Christian scholar.

"This action effectively tries and convicts a respected Southern Baptist leader without a hearing and without recourse. I am dismayed by the unnecessary pain this assault will inflict on Dr. Hinson, and I continue to wonder how much longer Southern Baptists will tolerate the devastating effects of partisan politics which have been inflicted on our Baptist way of life."

In response to Honeycutt's statement, the faculty association approved by unanimous vote the following statement:

"We the Faculty Association at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, endorse the statement of President Roy L. Honeycutt concerning the recent actions of the Foreign Mission Board trustees. We unequivocally support our colleague E. Glenn Hinson, a faithful Baptist witness, who for over thirty years has taught in accordance with and not contrary to Southern Seminary's Abstract of Principles. We are astonished that the trustees without consultation have called into question the freedom and autonomy of trustees and faculty of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. We call upon the entire faculty to provide Southern Baptists with a more extensive response to this travesty."

The FMB trustees voted 35-28 in their October meeting to delete the \$365,000 allocated to the operating budget of the European seminary. The FMB still maintains funding for missionary personnel on the seminary staff, including the seminary president. Currently three missionary couples are assigned to the seminary.

Trustees, who have disagreed about the European seminary's theological stance for years, thought the school showed it was continuing in a "liberal" direction by allowing Hinson to teach there for four months while he is on sabbatic leave, according to trustee Ron Wilson of California.

Wilson said trustees perceive Hinson as having liberal views of Scripture.

FMB President R. Keith Parks told the trustees the board's integrity was at stake if they didn't fulfill their 1992 financial commitment. The seminary plays a key part in Baptist expansion in Europe, he said, and defunding would cripple it and damage the board's credibility in Europe and around the world. He said after the 1992 agreement is complete, the board, under previous action, had anticipated a budget reduction.

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EDITORS' NOTE: An additional response story will follow next week.

HMB sees church loans  
as 'preferred lender'

By Jim Newton

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board adopted new objectives for its church loans division in an effort to become "the preferred lender of all Southern Baptist churches" rather than "the lender of last resort."

HMB directors also voted to restructure the staff organization of the church loans division in order to expand services to all Southern Baptist churches, including those in the 14 states where most SBC churches are located.

Although the objectives were changed to aggressively seek to make loans to qualified churches, the No. 1 priority will always be to provide loans to new and smaller churches, said Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis.

"We will never make loans to big churches at the expense of helping new and smaller churches get loans for new buildings and sites," Lewis told HMB directors.

Four new objectives for the church loans division were adopted by the board. They are:

- To continue and strengthen the division's support of qualified small churches and churches with first-unit building programs;
- To provide the highest quality of loan services to all Southern Baptist churches;
- To assist all Southern Baptist churches in obtaining financing subject to quality controls, funds availability, with priority being to service new congregations; and
- To become the preferred lending institution of all Southern Baptist churches.

Gene Bowman, chairman of the board's church loan committee and director of missions for Flint River Baptist Association in Griffin, Ga., said the action should provide upgraded service to churches in new work areas and expanded service in older state conventions.

In the past, the church loans division sought to help churches qualify for loans from other lending institutions, but has made very few loans to churches in the 14 older state conventions. It made loans primarily to churches who could not get a loan elsewhere.

Under the leadership of Bob Inlow, who became director of the division one year ago, the division has developed a comprehensive business and marketing plan for the future.

A consideration in the plan, said Inlow, is to diversify the loan portfolio by aggressively seeking to make loans to qualified churches in all state conventions. Interest earned on the loans is then reinvested so more money is available to loan to other churches.

"We want the church loans division to play a major role in helping start 15,000 new churches by the end of this decade in an effort to reach our Bold Mission Thrust Goal of 50,000 Southern Baptist congregations by the year 2000," said Inlow.

As a result of the new approach, Inlow said the division would be able to offer loans at lower, more-competitive interest rates.

HMB directors approved a new formula which allows the division to set the interest rate on church loans at a competitive interest rate based on market conditions and treasury yields. The current standard interest rate for church loans based on this formula is 9.25 percent.

The church loans division also will phase out its church bond program, placing its HMB Service Corp., on inactive status when legally feasible.

In the action to restructure the division staff, the board established three units within the division to handle loan administration, financial services, and loan production.

CORRECTION: In (BP) FMB roundup story titled "FMB trustees defund seminary, expand Soviet area ministry, affirm Parks" dated 10/10/91, please make the following change in the last sentence of paragraph 8.

...around the world. He said that after the 1992 agreement is complete, the board, under previous action, had anticipated a budget reduction.

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

Church, seminarian medical plan  
rate increase is lowest since 1987

By Tim Tune

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

DALLAS (BP)--Maintaining a general trend toward more moderate increases, the Southern Baptist Annuity Board will boost rates 4.9 percent on Jan. 1, 1992, in the church and seminarian comprehensive medical plans.

"We're pleased to announce an increase that is very moderate compared to other recent increases," said Joel Mathis, president and head of the insurance division of the Annuity Board. "This is the lowest increase since 1987." There was no increase in 1987.

Along with the 4.9 percent increase on Jan. 1, 1992, Mathis said there probably will be another increase July 1, 1992, due to the six-month rating requirements of The Prudential Insurance Company of America. Mathis suggested churches plan for a total increase of 11 percent for medical insurance in 1992.

To figure out how much to estimate, Mathis said participants can multiply their current rate times 12 and add 11 percent. He urged participants to pass on this information to church budget committees.

Mathis tried to put into perspective the moderation of recent increases and the chronology of the slow-down.

Faced with rapidly increasing health-care costs, in 1988 rates had to be raised 20 percent and another 30 percent in 1989. U.S. medical costs continue to increase about 20 percent annually, Mathis said.

On Jan. 1, 1990, the board began implementing a ZIP Code-based rating system that links rates to medical costs on a local basis. The board raised rates an average of 20 percent and also began using a six-month rating schedule.

On July 1, 1990, with additional localizing, rates again were increased, but most participants' rates increased less than 15 percent. And The Prudential Insurance Company of America began providing services.

On Jan. 1 of this year rates increased 10 percent or less for 87 percent of participants. Because of how the ZIP Code rating was implemented, 13 percent had no increase. On July 1, rates increased 11.4 percent for all participants. Some participants' rates may have increased more if they moved to a new ZIP Code, added a dependent or had a birthday that put them into a higher age bracket.

A combination of factors has contributed to the slow-down of rate increases, according to Mathis.

"The changing trend in rate increases is due in large part to the effective strategy and tactics that The Prudential helped us implement," said Mathis, who came to the board in April.

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In mid-1990, the Annuity Board entered an agreement with The Prudential to provide claims-paying and managed-care services. Since then, Mathis said, cash flow in the plans has improved significantly.

"The plans had been suffering staggering deficits for four years," he said. "But now, after just more than a year with The Prudential, we are again seeing positive cash flow in some months."

"The Prudential's creative and aggressive approach to managing benefits and their efficient service have saved the plan a lot of money," said Mathis. "We have been able to slow the hemorrhaging of the plan's reserves and to pass the savings on to participants in the form of lower increases."

Among tactics The Prudential helped the Annuity Board implement, Mathis said, the most significant are modifications that give participants more responsibility for the cost of medical treatment. Those modifications include higher deductibles and higher copayment limits.

"But every little thing helps some," he said. "We expanded the kinds of treatments that need to be cleared for maximum benefits, we added a very aggressive mental health-care management program, we modified maternity benefits. ... All of this has dramatically turned around the program in just over a year."

More benefits, which will help participants save money directly, are being added periodically, said Mathis. In July the board added PruNetwork, a modified preferred provider organization, to the plans. Participants get enhanced benefits if they use specific -- preferred -- health-care providers. The option is available only to participants in 10 localities. But on Jan. 1, 1992, all participants will be eligible and networks in more than 30 additional localities will be available. More than half the participants will live within reasonable driving distance of a provider where the plan offers enhanced benefits, Mathis said.

In mid-September a similar network was opened with eight Baptist hospitals. As many as 20 more Baptist hospitals are expected to be participating by Jan. 1. Participants are being notified as these hospitals begin participating, Mathis said.

"Due to the extremely low rate increase, it was felt that no other benefit changes were necessary in the plans on Jan. 1, 1992," said Mathis. However, the Annuity Board is reviewing several additional plan enhancements, he said.

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New Orleans Seminary  
experiences record enrollment

By Debbie Moore

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary began its 74th year with the largest student enrollment the school ever has experienced, an increase of 6 percent over last year's enrollment.

Men and women from 36 states and 10 foreign countries make up the current student body for NOBTS's main campus and its ten extension centers.

Several new facilities will be dedicated during this school year: the renovated Roland Q. Leavell Chapel, a new communication center with a television studio and 24-hour FM Christian radio station, and The Center for Evangelism and Church Growth.

The 1991-92 school year also saw the addition of four new faculty members: Sidney L. Buckley as associate professor of voice; Charles A. Ray Jr. as associate professor of New Testament and Greek; Thomas S. Roote Jr. as associate professor of church administration; and Paula A. Stringer as assistant professor of early childhood education.

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Church bringing new life  
to abandoned mall

By Dave Parker

BROKEN ARROW, Okla. (BP)--The halls are silent now, the cash registers quiet and the shoppers gone to other malls. The lightposts and trees seem eery in front of vacant storefronts.

Inside the now empty stores is little evidence of past commercial activity. A note taped to a post reminds some nameless clerk to deduct a 10 percent discount on merchandise marked for clearance.

Beginning Nov. 24, though, a new life will be breathed into the former mall in Broken Arrow, a suburb of Tulsa, Okla. On that date, sounds of praise will echo down the corridors as the mall becomes the new home of Gracemont Baptist Church.

Pastor Frank Ashby, who came to Gracemont from Northway Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, said the entire church is excited about the impending move.

"The church had been close to 900 in attendance on several occasions, but each time had fallen back because of space," he explained, citing shortages in parking and education space.

Gracemont has grown steadily over the years after its founding in 1967. It now has more than 3,000 members and a Sunday school enrollment of 2,000. It was listed as the 25th fastest-growing church in the Southern Baptist Convention in 1977.

Peak attendance, though, was in 1978-79, when nearly 1,000 attended. It also peaked at around 900 in 1985, but had declined steadily the past few years until Ashby came in February.

"We began to see the Lord really moving here, and we knew we had to have more space," Ashby said. "We had over 300 additions since February and have baptized 107."

The church previously had considered a traditional move, but could not afford the estimated \$9-14 million for that, so church members began praying for God's guidance. Ashby had a realtor show him the mall, which was on the market for \$7 million.

"I felt like this might be a good alternative, but how do you communicate that to your people, that you would like them to buy a mall?," he asked. He contacted a group of church leaders; they prayed about it and then drove to the mall.

"For a week we prayed about it, and to a person they said they felt like we should pursue this," Ashby said. "One member said he was more excited about this than when he pulled the first stick of lumber off the truck to build the first facility."

The congregation was asked to pray about it, then in April the church met at the mall. By a 92 percent vote, the church decided to pursue the purchase.

While God worked on the congregation's hearts, He also worked through the government agencies involved. The Resolution Trust Corp. lowered its asking price to \$3.5 million. Then, a week before Gracemont finalized its offer, it lowered the price again to \$2.25 million. The church bid \$1.7 million, and the RTC accepted it.

"That's less than \$10 per square foot," Ashby noted.

On Oct. 7, the Broken Arrow City Council approved the special use permit for a church, which Ashby also attributed to God.

"If that mall had been closer to the expressway, if more businesses had built up around it, or if any neighbors had objected, it would not have worked," he said.

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Gracemont always has been a leader in baptisms, averaging over 105 a year, and it has continued that emphasis under Ashby.

"We feel we are in the midst of a revival, a spiritual renewal," he said. "All the things along the way the Lord has worked out. We feel like we're just walking through doors the Lord is opening. We feel like we're just picking up the manna."

"You just walk through these halls and you sense the presence of God," he said. "We have already had someone saved here. For us, that is what's important."

"We have all kinds of opportunities here. There are all kinds of things that a traditional church can't do," such as an indoor playground for children and softball fields outside.

He said the idea of a church moving into a mall has caught the imagination of Tulsa.

"This is not like a traditional relocation," he said. "People all over Tulsa are captivated by it. People dream when they do something like this. It lifts their vision."

"We are taking an empty mall not being used by anybody and turning it into a place to worship God."

Plus, he said, it "just makes sense, economically and space-wise. This will triple the size of our facility from 60,000 to 180,000 square feet, and give us 800 parking spaces. The marketplace is where the gospel belongs. This is a symbol of us taking the gospel where the people are."

He credited his church with vision enough to take this bold step.

"It is a real credit to the people and their faith, that they would recognize the Lord's hand in this," he said. "You walk in here and you think about what God's going to do. It is awesome what God is doing."

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(BP) photos available on request from Oklahoma Baptist Messenger

Senior adults never too old  
to set goals, seek excellence

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--A person is never too old to set goals, seek life's direction or aspire to excellence, a speaker told a group of senior adults attending a conference in early October.

Knowing where you want to go gets you where you want to be, Kathy Hollar, director of special adult ministries at First Baptist Church of Jonesboro, Ark., told about 150 senior adults attending a Chautauqua at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center. Hollar was teaching the Broadman Press book, "Rising Above the Crowd," by Brian Harbour, pastor of First Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas.

"When you get where you are going, will you be where you want to be? Excellence comes to those who know where they want to go," Hollar said.

"Don't just find yourself somewhere. You decide who you are going to be by the decisions and choices you make," she said. "Nothing is required of you but being the best that you can be."

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A person who aspires to excellence will face glitches, Hollar acknowledged. Among obstacles, she said, are adversity, laziness and envy. Adversity can come in the form of a person who discourages others and tries to derail their good intentions. Laziness can describe one who "muddles in mediocrity." Envy often is experienced when good things happen to other people, she said.

She said procrastination is also the enemy of achieving excellence.

"Doing nothing keeps us from achieving anything."

A person who never sets goals will never know if he has accomplished anything, Hollar said.

"Set small goals at first, like reading a book, so you'll know when you've accomplished them," she advised.

"What do we do when trouble comes to visit?" she asked. "You should prepare for temptation and be committed to your goal. Inner commitment is the key. What you commit your heart to should be what you believe in."

She also said a person who strives for excellence and successful attainment of goals should be flexible. Senior adults should look at their problems as opportunities rather than obstacles.

To improve their attitudes, Hollar suggested senior adults begin with a personal inventory of the good things God has done for them; think about their achievements; seek the company of happy, enthusiastic people; and learn to see things as they can be.

Once opportunities are identified, act on them," Hollar said. "The ultimate failure is not that we try something and fail, but that we fail to try something."

Hollar listed other key ingredients for achieving excellence mentioned in Harbour's book. They are:

- Develop good habits.
- Refuse to give up.
- Keep learning.
- Be a giver.
- Learn to move past failures.
- Bring God into the situation through prayer.
- See life as a team sport.

Chautauquas are sponsored by the family ministry department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. More than 1,100 senior adults attended the Chautauqua at Ridgecrest, Oct. 7-11.

Chautauquas began in 1972 with one conference and 400 participants. In 1991, 15 Chautauquas are scheduled for a total attendance of about 11,000, according to officials in the family ministry department.

Senior adults urged  
to minister to thers

By Linda Lawson

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Christian senior adults were urged to take on "private projects" to help other people during an Oct. 8 session on "Learning to Touch" during a senior adult Chautauqua at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Helen Allan, retired executive director of Woman's Missionary Union for the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, said her private projects have included cooking meals for a retired missionary couple in ill health and transporting other senior adults to local nursing homes to visit their friends.

"We need to find ways to work out God's call in our lives," said Allan, 66, who now lives at Ridgecrest, N.C., and attends Ridgecrest Baptist Church.

A total of 823 senior adults attended the Oct. 7-11 Chautauqua, one of 15 being conducted this fall by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

For senior adults to be effective ministers, they must first be willing to help others, said Allan. Then they must approach ministry with the right attitudes, make themselves available and then get involved in meeting needs.

Several senior adults attending the session outlined ways they are ministering to others.

Doris Bines, a member of Highland Baptist Church of Lubbock, Texas, said she works as a hospital volunteer and also delivers Meals on Wheels to homebound people.

"If you want to touch people, take them a meal and give them a hug," said Bines.

"Being a volunteer has changed me," she continued. "Don't sit home. Do volunteer work. It's really a blessing."

Jerry Blanvelt of Fielder Road Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, said she is one of 18 trained hospice volunteers from her church who minister to terminally ill persons and their families.

While helping others, Blanvelt said, "I'm the one who has learned and benefitted."

Gerry Davidson of Pleasant Valley Baptist Church in Amarillo, Texas, began a Sunday school class of women who had been inactive in the church.

"They're all very active now, and I'm so proud of them," said Davidson.

Ralph Miller of Calvary Baptist Church in Idaho Falls, Idaho, said a group of men in his congregation have volunteered to do car maintenance and repairs for women who are living alone.

Dot Rawls of Northcrest Baptist Church in Meridian, Miss., cited the need for senior adults to share their faith with people who are not Christians.

"Anybody can witness," she said. "The most personal thing you can do is give your testimony."

When senior adults are the recipients of ministry, Allan urged them to express appreciation and affirm those who help them.

Ruetta Oglesby of Southside Baptist Church in Abilene, Texas, cited a nurse who cares for her husband, Eddie, in an Abilene nursing home.

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"She has taken a personal interest in him," said Oglesby. "She has touched my life in the ways she has responded to a great need."

Senior adults should model their helping efforts after Jesus who reached out in love to meet the needs of others, Allan said.

Suggestions for reaching out included personal visits, sending cards and letters, making telephone calls, praying for others, hugging people, making eye contact while talking with people, learning to listen and being available.

"Touching people says we care," said Allan.

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Draper says churches  
need encouragers

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Churches today need persons who will "make it their purpose and passion to be encouragers," Southern Baptist Sunday School Board President James T. Draper Jr. told a seminary chapel audience.

"I think if I could chose something for myself, I'd like to be known as an encourager," said Draper at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Draper's Oct. 8 sermon at the Louisville, Ky., school was his first public address during a visit to a Southern Baptist institution since assuming the board presidency in August.

Contemporary society has multiple pressures that cause much hurt and loneliness which accentuate the need for the ministry of encouragement, Draper said.

Encouragement, he said, is also needed for those who are struggling with their Christian faith. "They're not bad people," he said. "They have just lost heart. We need to help them find their faith. We need to be encouragers. That's what you do when you lose something, you look for it."

Draper emphasized restoration is needed for those who have made mistakes. "If the gospel means anything, it means that failure doesn't have to be final," he said. "It doesn't have to be fatal. It means that we can start over again. It means that we can have our sins forgiven. We can be restored. We can be lifted."

Christians have a unique message to convey, he said: "We have good news in a bad news world. We have the wonderful good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ and we need to encourage with our witness those who need the gospel."

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Draper says board will  
increase academic publishing

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist Sunday School Board President James T. Draper Jr. believes stepped-up publishing of academic books will give the board a "more direct tie" to Southern Baptist seminaries.

Broadman Press, the Sunday School Board's book publishing arm, is "aggressively soliciting" seminary professors to write academic books, said Draper in an interview at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Draper spoke in an Oct. 8 chapel service at the Louisville, Ky., school.

The board wants to publish books written specifically for students and marketed as textbooks, he said. Broadman personnel, he added, believe most academic books are written for professors rather than students.

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"We feel there will be a unique market for it," said Draper. "There are within our own (Southern Baptist) seminaries 10,000 students in a given year."

The books could also be appealing to non-Southern Baptist schools that have "a strong evangelical base," he said.

Draper also reiterated his goal to be a reconciler among the feuding factions in the Southern Baptist Convention. "People ask me whether we are going to produce literature for conservatives or moderates," he said. "We are going to produce them for both. We are going to work to have the best Bible teaching materials available. I am convinced that if we do that we will satisfy most Southern Baptists."

Draper said he will maintain "high visibility" as board president. He plans to be in 13 states before the end of the year. "I am going to be there to be positive and to call attention to the good things that are happening," he said.

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Bitterness will destroy ministry,  
Bryant tells Southwesterners

By Matthew Brady

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Bitterness will "absolutely stop your Christian life," world-record holder and author Rob Bryant told students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary during a recent chapel service.

Bryant, a member of Southcliff Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, told students of his struggle with bitterness after a 1982 accident left him paralyzed from the waist down.

"I cried out to God, 'I don't understand, Lord. Why did you allow this ever to happen to me?'" he said. But Bryant said he remembered how Job's story ended and decided he wanted the end of that story for his life also.

"I said, 'Lord, take the bitterness away. I just want to be a choice servant of yours. If this is what it takes, so be it,'" he said. "And all the bitterness left, just like that."

Bryant's physical therapists gave him a list of 18 things he needed to do to walk again. The first 17 things involved upper body strength, but the last item called for something he didn't have and couldn't do anything about -- leg movement. Trusting God to provide the movement, Bryant concentrated on the other 17 things.

"In the history of Rancho Los Amigos, the largest rehabilitation center on the West Coast, I am the only T-12 paraplegic to ever make it through that list -- that's God," he said.

With the help of braces and crutches, Bryant walked out of the rehab center in 1983. One year later he walked into the record books by walking from Fort Worth to Dallas using braces and crutches.

He set another world record last year when he traveled across the United States in a three-wheeled rowing machine. His 3,280-mile trip shattered the previous land rowing record of 795 miles. The weight per stroke on his RowCycle averaged 60 to 120 pounds, with Bryant making 15,000 to 20,000 strokes per day. In addition, he had 100 speaking engagements during the 120-day journey.

To reach goals, Bryant told the students they need to do five things: set the goal, visualize the steps, count the cost, pay the price, and finally, "don't ever give up on a dream God has given you."

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He has written two books: "Lord, Lift Me Up (and let me stand)," about his conversion, injury, rehabilitation and record-setting walk, and "The Impossible Made Possible," about his row across the United States.

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

'Buckle your belt, look  
for trouble,' says Powell

By Breena Kent Paine

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--"To be alive means to buckle your belt and look for trouble," the Southern Baptist Convention's Annuity Board president told students and faculty at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Speaking during the seminary's recent Layne Lecture Series, Paul Powell said, "You can be sailing under orders and be near to Christ in relationship and still be hit by a storm."

In order to survive, a Christian must know what to believe, how to breathe, and when to leave, said Powell, who used Acts 27 as his source.

To keep his faith in God throughout the storm, the Christian must believe "God is not the author of your troubles; God will never allow more to be put on you than you can bear; God is near to the brokenhearted; (and) God can bring some good out of the worst circumstances," he said.

Second, "When the storms build up pressure, you need to know how to breathe," continued Powell. "When life tumbles in, we need to know how to weep.

"In your grief, be sure to go to God and share with him," he explained. Then "share your grief with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

"These are the days you need to be making good close friends in the ministry," continued Powell, "so that when that Garden of Gethsemane comes for you, there will be someone by your side to help you through."

Last, "There's a time to leave it behind and go on with life. ... Learn what you can from it. Let it draw you nearer to the Lord, but then leave it behind and get on with the future (because) there's a time when you need to come out of your grieving."

Powell concluded, "If you can get close to the Captain of Salvation, you'll hear him say, 'Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world,' and he can overcome your troubles, too."

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(BP) photo mailed upon request from New Orleans Seminary

Religious liberty taken for  
granted by Baptists, expert says

By Scott Collins

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) -- Religious liberty is being given "little place or at best, taken for granted by Baptists in America today," a former executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs said during a student forum Oct. 9 at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Speaking at the seminary's first Theological Fellowship meeting of the fall semester, James Wood, director of the J.M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies at Baylor University, told students that the "principle of religious liberty has become far less Baptist in recent times.

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"Modern-day Baptists in America need a reawakening to an understanding of religious liberty as vital to authentic faith and practice, integral to the mission of the church and an ally of true religion," Wood said.

Just as the constitutional idea of religious liberty is becoming less Baptist, Wood said religious liberty has been "denied as a right within the Baptist fellowship, and within many denominational structures, all in the name of a claimed orthodoxy that has no historical or Baptist confessional validation."

The threats to religious liberty in the United States and among Baptists come from "those who would obscure an authentic separation of church and state...by the merging of their religious faith with American nationalism and America's national interest."

According to Wood, when faith is mixed with state policies and programs, "the role of biblical faith is perverted, no matter how well-intentioned the advocates of such a viewpoint may be.

"The Church cannot be made to serve political ends, whether they be secular or ecclesiastical, without degrading itself and thereby denying its Lord," Wood said.

He said the use of religion and the name of God for "blatantly political and profane purposes" may be "the most serious problem facing Baptists, and indeed, the Church at large, in American public life today."

Wood's address at Southwestern comes during the bicentennial year of the U.S. Bill of Rights, which became law Dec. 15, 1791, two years after the Constitution was approved by the states.

Wood said the bicentennial celebration of the Bill of Rights is a time for Baptists and all Americans to remember the past, "but to find in that remembrance meaning and significance for the present."

The bicentennial is a time for modern-day Baptists to remember the struggle of Baptists in Colonial America, Wood said. Recounting the struggles of early Baptists in America, he described them as "among the most persecuted of all the religious sectarians" of the time.

The bicentennial is also a time to remember that Baptists were the leaders in the effort of secure both civil and religious freedom, he said. Wood added that most historians today recognize Baptists as "the most active of the Colonial religious bodies in their increasing struggle for religious freedom and separation of church and state."

That role should not be forgotten today, Wood said, because the Bill of Rights championed by Baptists made religious liberty possible for the first time "in all of human history."

"In observing the bicentennial of the Bill of Rights, one must not fail to acknowledge the contribution of Baptists to the adoption of the constitutional guarantees that are embodied" in the First Amendment, Wood said.

"The bicentennial of the American Bill of Rights is not only a time for remembrance, it is a time for Baptists and all Americans to rededicate themselves to the civil and religious liberty that for 200 years has been the hallmark of America's nationhood," Wood said.

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

Students find meaning of  
'the seminary family'

By Matthew Brady

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--After raising three children of their own, Bill McBride and his wife, Chessie, didn't expect to be parents to their two-year-old granddaughter.

But the unexpected became reality in 1988 when a head-on collision took the life of their 21-year-old daughter.

In 1985, David Smith and his wife, Debbie, discovered their five-month-old third child had a genetic disease. The subsequent medical bills soon exceeded their insurance and the Smiths sank into debt.

In the aftermath of their tragedies, the McBrides and Smiths discovered, as hundreds of students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary have discovered through the years, a network of emotional, spiritual and financial support within the seminary family. That network, according to seminary staff members, is what makes attending the seminary possible for many future ministers.

David McQuitty, Southwestern Seminary's director of student aid, plays a key role in this network. McBride likens McQuitty to the disciple Andrew. "Instead of saying, 'We don't have any money to buy anything,' like the disciples did, he goes out there and finds the guy who has five loaves and two fish," McBride said.

McQuitty's efforts have helped McBride through his daughter's death and through other troubles, such as his car getting stolen last year and the heart attack he suffered this spring.

For the Smiths, McQuitty was able to locate a foundation willing to help pay for their child's medical bills.

McQuitty is quick to point out his office is just part of what he calls "the grace touch." Seminary faculty, staff, students and local churches get involved too.

"I had a faculty member this week slip a person a hundred, and another one gave a car," he said. "I've seen them (the faculty) pass the hat."

Students have gotten involved through the "Students' Student Fund." Created by donations from current and former students, the fund is used exclusively for students in need. McQuitty said \$10,000 to \$15,000 have gone into this fund over the past three years.

"If there is a hundred in it, and there's a legitimate need, then a hundred goes out," he said. "Our deal here is not to keep the resources God gives us, but to use them."

How this money and the other resources of the seminary are distributed varies from case to case, McQuitty said. Sometimes the seminary will provide direct financial support. At other times the school will be able to get a student discounts on car rentals or airplane tickets. Timing is a big factor in determining how to help a student, McQuitty said.

"If there is one time to help this guy, would it be now? That's the principal we use," he said.

For instance, last fall Chuck Schroer's mother was scheduled for colon cancer surgery in Sioux Falls, S.D. Her doctors weren't sure she would survive the operation. The Schroers called McQuitty on a Thursday asking for help with airline tickets. On Friday, they had the money.

His mother survived the operation but died one month later. "In a way, the seminary provided funds for me to see my mother for the last time," Schroer said.

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As McBride sees it, the struggles he and his classmates are going through will give them something to take back into their ministries and say, "this is not something I've known in theory. This is a fact. It's reality. But the one shepherding me is walking right beside me, leading me into some tough territory, and I'm making it through."

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

EDITORS' NOTE: Following is part three of a four-part series on expectations Southern Baptists have of pastors.

Southern Baptists differ  
on styles of evangelism

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Although Southern Baptists generally agree about what constitutes a quality pastor, they differ widely about styles of evangelism, according to a survey conducted by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Louisville, Ky., school's survey found those who held the most literal views on Scripture preferred pastors who practice a confronting style of evangelism.

About 3,200 Southern Baptist clergy and laity in eight southeastern states responded to the survey funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. in Indianapolis.

"Some Southern Baptists prefer a more nurturing style of evangelism while others have a more aggressive, confronting style in their expectations," said researcher Larry McSwain, Southern Seminary provost. "That difference can largely be explained by the theological differences that have been at the root of our controversy."

Most of those who preferred the most confronting style of evangelism said they view the Bible as the "inspired Word of God without error not only in matters of faith, but also in historical, scientific, geographic and other secular matters." About 41 percent of the respondents chose this view of Scripture.

Thirty-eight percent said they view the Bible as "the inspired, authoritative Word of God without error in all that it says about faith and morals." Another 17 percent chose to describe the Bible as "the inspired Word of God and its basic moral and religious teachings are clear and true, even if it does contain some human error." Fewer than five percent preferred to describe the Bible as "a useful guide for Christians in their search for basic moral and religious teachings."

"Perceptions of which characteristics are important for good pastors seem to vary more on the basis of religious belief than on the basis of personal or church demographics," said seminary researcher John Dever. "It does not seem to make much difference whether the church is in the city or rural area or whether the person is old or young, male or female. The one item that seems to cause variance in expectations more than anything else is belief about the Bible."

Although belief about the Bible has dominated much of the debate in the 12-year controversy among Southern Baptists, the issue seems to have little effect on denominational loyalty. Southern Baptists of differing opinions about the Bible rated denominational commitment as a "major asset" for a pastor. Overall, the respondents ranked denominational loyalty as the fifth on a list of 14 pastoral characteristics. "This suggests that it will be difficult for pastors to lead churches into alternative structures when the denominational loyalty is as high as it is reflected in this survey," McSwain said. "The denomination is probably going to hold together."

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Another prominent theme in the denominational controversy, conservative social/political issues, did not have major significance in terms of defining quality pastors. Overall, the respondents ranked pastoral leadership on conservative issues as the least important characteristic for a quality pastor.

Those conservative issues included opposition to abortion and women's ordination and advocacy for classroom prayers in public schools.

Pastoral leadership on these issues "was important to a segment of Southern Baptists, namely those who hold the most conservative views of Scripture," McSwain said. Still, those with that view of Scripture ranked conservative cause issues third from the bottom on the list of pastoral characteristics.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Following is part four of a four-part series on expectations Southern Baptists have about pastors.

Few pastors encourage  
young persons to consider ministry

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist young people are receiving little encouragement to consider a call to the ministry, a study of Southern Baptists revealed.

Interviews with persons identified in the study as "quality pastors" found few of them were taking intentional measures to nurture persons toward a call to ministry. The interviews were conducted by researchers at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., as part of a study of Southern Baptist perceptions of quality pastoral ministry. The seminary, with the aid of \$350,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. in Indianapolis, polled Southern Baptists in eight Southeastern states. About 3,200 laity and clergy responded to the survey.

"We saw pastors of large churches who were saying we are reluctant to encourage anyone to enter the ministry in the circumstances in which we find ourselves," said researcher John Dever, Southern Seminary professor of church and community.

The pastorate has become a "besieged role," added researcher Larry McSwain, seminary provost. Growing societal pressures, greater demands to respond to personal and family crises, the denominational crisis, the high level of forced terminations and the moral failures of high profile ministers have contributed to ministers' reluctance to encourage young people to pursue a ministry career, said McSwain.

Most of the quality pastors, however, said their own ministerial call was nurtured by the church and pastor/mentors, said Dever: "The church needs to support and nourish the call the same way it directs and encourages young people in need of salvation. We nurture young people into the salvation experience. We also need to nurture them into the call experience." The call experience, he said, was a "non-negotiable aspect" of the pastors' identity. "The call was so strong and so meaningful that their whole lives were changed and even in the most difficult times they revert back to the call for their strength and assurance," Dever explained.

Few of the pastors said they regularly issue special invitations for young persons to enter full-time Christian service, Dever reported. Yet many of them indicated they made their ministry commitment in response to such an invitation.

"Local churches must be revived in the nurturing role, give public invitations to Christian ministry and encourage and give affirmation to talented young people" who show gifts for ministry, said McSwain.

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Lack of encouragement for Southern Baptist young people to enter ministry stems in part from the "organizational confusion" caused by the denominational controversy, added Bill J. Leonard, a church history professor at Southern.

Southern Baptists, he stressed, have lost their "organizational mechanisms" for nurturing persons toward the ministry. The call to ministry is no longer as widely stressed through denominational organizations, study courses and youth camps as it once was, Leonard observed.

Lilly project researchers are seeking to inform Southern Baptists that fewer Southern Baptist young people are showing interest in vocational ministry. They have shared the findings of their study with state convention executives, denominational agency staff members, associational gatherings and seminary continuing education conferences.

Unless a "renewed emphasis" is placed on nurturing persons toward a call to ministry, Southern Baptists could face a shortage of pastors, Dever warned. The Southern Baptist Annuity Board projects nearly 17,000 persons enrolled in its annuity program will reach 65 in the next 15 years. A large percentage of those future annuitants are pastors.

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What people sing may shape  
theology more than sermons

By Mark Wingfield

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Don't tell the pastor, but musicians believe Christians learn more theology from what they sing than from the sermons they hear. Don't laugh, Sunday school teacher. Your students likely retain more from hymns than from Sunday school lessons as well.

"It has been said people get their theology more from the hymns they sing than from the sermons they hear or the Sunday school lessons they study," said Hugh McElrath, professor of church music at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. "What we take on our lips is very important. We Baptists say we don't have creeds, but we sing our creeds. Our hymns are our statements of belief. "Next to the Bible, our hymnals have been our most formative resource," he said. "I don't think there's any doubt about that."

Wes Forbis, editor of the 1991 edition of The Baptist Hymnal, said hymns taught him theology as a child. "That's where I learned about the Trinity. That's where I learned about Isaiah 6: 'Holy, Holy, Holy.'"

"Most of our theology for the person in the pew is learned through hymns," adds Jim Cordell, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church music department. "People can probably quote more first and last verses of hymns than Scriptures." The influence hymns have on theology was a concern for Forbis as editor of Southern Baptists' new hymnal, he said.

"Baptists have been a people of the book, and it was my deep intention that we have a hymn book for people of the book," he said.

Each line of every hymn was scrutinized by a 10-member subcommittee, he said. McElrath served on that committee.

Many items of incorrect theology held by Baptists today can be traced to poorly written hymns, Cordell said. "Some of the older gospel songs, when you study the texts, are bankrupt theologically."

As an example, Southern Seminary theology professor William Hendricks, who also served on the hymnal committee, cites the gospel favorite "I'll Fly Away." With an emphasis on "I," this song promotes the idea that Christians empower themselves more than being empowered by God, he said.

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McElrath agreed that is a common downfall of Christian songs. "The concern I had on the committee was for theological balance," he said. "Two-thirds of the hymns are dealing with I, me and my, talking about how I feel. Only about a third have to do with addressing God in prayer and praise."

Hymns should help participants in corporate worship acknowledge both vertical and horizontal relationships, Cordell added. The vertical is praise to God expressed by hymns such as "Holy, Holy, Holy," he said, while the horizontal represents fellowship between believers through hymns such as "What a Fellowship."

Music reveals what's inside a person's mind, McElrath concluded. "To take note of what we choose to sing is to learn a great deal about what we believe."

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First church to order hymnals  
pleased with final product

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

RICHMOND, Ky. (BP)--First Baptist Church of Richmond, Ky., bought the latest edition of The Baptist Hymnal sight unseen -- by anybody.

First Baptist Church ordered the new hymnal in February 1988, three years before the first copy rolled off the presses.

The order represented an act of faith, said Minister of Music Dick Ham. The church trusted the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department to produce a hymnal that would be solid theologically, musically and technically.

For its faith, First Baptist Church earned the distinction of being the first congregation to order the hymnal. In fact, the order came so early the hymnal was little more than early plans in the minds of its editors.

But now, six months after members first sang from the new hymnal, First Church feels its faith was justified, Ham said.

"The congregation's reaction has been very positive," he reported. "I haven't had any negative response, and I don't believe I could be more pleased." The new hymnal contains "a wealth of information," Ham said, noting it includes a blend of old standards and many of the new tunes.

First Church still used the 1956 edition of The Baptist Hymnal until it started using the new volume this Easter. The congregation never decided it needed to buy the 1975 edition, feeling the earlier book served well.

"I tried to get them to buy the '75 hymnal when I came here eight years ago," Ham said. "But it's hard to buy new hymn books unless the cover is falling off the old ones." By the late '80s, the covers were showing the wear on aged hymnals, and the church set up a fund to buy new books. Members raised enough money to get 600 pew hymnals for the church, 100 pew hymnals for its Whitehall Baptist Mission, 80 loose-leaf hymnals for the choir, leather-bound pulpit hymnals and special editions for the organist and pianist. Ham has been trying to lead the church to sing all the songs in the hymnal in the first year of its use. So far, the church has liked what it's sung. Classics such as "Victory in Jesus" and "In the Garden" that were not in the 1956 hymnal have pleased folks who remember them from the 1940 Broadman Hymnal.

And those old, popular tunes make members receptive to newer hymns, Ham said: "People say, 'I don't know a lot about music, but I know what I like.' What they mean is, 'I like what I know.'"

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"A minister of music's responsibility is to help them know more and more. It's just like a pastor doesn't preach from two or three books of the Bible. He's responsible for helping them know more."

Ham has confidence in doing just that, because he has confidence in the hymnal and its editors.

"We Baptists are very picky about our doctrine and theology," he explained. "Every hymn in this book was read by a doctrinal reader, and I don't have to worry about it." The church also wanted to buy the new hymnal because of tradition, Ham added: "There are some good hymnals, but we're committed Southern Baptists. It's important to have a hymnal by Southern Baptists, for Southern Baptists, with 'Baptist' on the cover."

First Church still isn't finished buying the hymnals, he said. Some individuals are ordering copies for their personal use. And a Sunday school class is planning to buy copies for shut-ins, so they can worship with the congregation when services are aired on local television.

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Hymnal leads to decision  
at Kentucky church

By Mark Wingfield

Baptist Press  
10/11/91

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Members of Vine Street Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., are singing the praises of a page in the new Baptist Hymnal that doesn't contain a single note.

As a result of reading the plan of Christian salvation on page 667 of the new hymnal, one adult professed faith in Jesus Christ the first day the church used its new hymnals. Music Minister Bill Anderson explained the church decided to use its new hymnals during a baptismal service the week before a hymnal dedication service was planned last spring. That decision was made because the new hymnal contains more songs related to baptism and the Lord's Supper.

"Toward the end of the service, the pastor was calling attention to a few things in the new hymnal" and pointed out the plan of salvation, Anderson related. During the brief sermon that morning, the visitor read the plan of salvation and decided he should respond.

"Apparently that was the last step of his search," Anderson said. "He said he had never seen everything lined up that way in one place. He had been given Scriptures to look over several times, but here they were on one page."

After witnessing a profession of faith that Sunday, church members dedicated the hymnals with even more appreciation the next Sunday, Anderson said.

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