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92-41

Buzzard tells CLC seminar

'separation' has been distorted

By Louis Moore

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Southern Baptist law professor said the reverence with which some religious leaders today treat "the premiere slogan, the wall of separation" tends to leave the erroneous impression that nothing, including morality and religious values, should pass from the churches to society or culture or government.

Lynn Buzzard, professor of law and director of church-state studies at Campbell University's School of Law in Buies Creek, N.C., said such an attitude distorts the Constitution and the meaning the founding fathers intended for the First Amendment.

He pointed out the First Amendment does not use the phrase "separation of church and state." The First Amendment says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

"It (the phrase 'separation of church and state') is almost an invocation that is given at any conference on church and state today, a sort of constitutional chant, or if you will, a sound byte, which for many people is supposed to silence all further discussions," he said. "Many Baptists are fond of this phrase and use it in a kind of invitational way, particularly those who at times chide conservatives for slogans about inerrancy, and yet they themselves genuflect before the wall, wailing lest the wall be breached in some way."

Speaking to the 25th annual Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission seminar, Buzzard said the slogan itself "does not resolve the complicated questions" that surround issues of religious freedom today. "The problem is the slogan has become not simply a legal term but stands for a set of attitudes and perspectives," he said. "There are areas in which the image of separation of church and state is an appropriate and powerful image that needs to be affirmed by us, and then there are some areas where the image invites distortion and confusion.

"Any context in which government appropriates the holy for itself, when it becomes the possessor and the guardian of the faith in a kind of divine-right sort of sense properly invokes a demand for separation of church and state," Buzzard said. "When government misuses religion, it invites a similar invocation. Whenever the state takes the place of God, we might properly talk about the importance of a wall of separation."

When religion is used for political purposes, that also makes it appropriate to speak of the separation of church and state, he said. "There will always be a temptation on the part of any political faction -- it has occurred in the United States before; I suspect it will occur again around election time -- for political forces to attempt to ally themselves with some religious faction in order to get their publicity and to get their support. This is a fraud. It is a misuse of religion. It is an attempt by a political faction to temporarily ally itself with a religious group, only to be divorced after the election."

Another appropriate reference to separation of church and state occurs in regard to the vast array of government regulations which today dramatically impact religious life, Buzzard said. "The regulatory state can be just as destructive of the distinctives of religious faith as can be a hostile state," he said.

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"In fact, it can be worse because the hostile state must be open about it, and it invites prophetic response and it invites even civil disobedience perhaps. But the state that is out to do good (in the name of regulations) is the most dangerous state because it is itself deluded about its real ultimate purposes."

On the other hand, there are situations in which blind loyalty to the impenetrable wall of separation of church and state produces serious problems and distortions, Buzzard said.

"The dominance of the slogan itself is a distortion," he said. "Anyone who suggests that the framers of the Constitution intended a separation of church and state in the form in which it is often today advocated is either ignorant or dishonest," he said. "The framers did not intend that. It may or may not be good policy today, but it is clearly not what the framers intended. But there is a tendency of people who use the slogan to try to invite all of us to remember the framers, and 'how dare we disagree with them.'"

"One of the major distortions is that it invites us to think of these issues of church and state as primarily and principally legal questions that ought to be solved by constitutional historians, by people who went to law school and can tell you what jurisprudence is," he said.

"But in fact this legal language often masks the underlying philosophic policy and political questions that are at the core of church/state issues... Fundamental to the questions of church and state are basic questions of philosophy, theology and political thought, and these are not resolved by the invocation of the phrase, 'the wall of separation,' borrowed from Jefferson and inserted in a court opinion."

Buzzard said the distortion also occurs when the language and image of separation of church and state are used to divide all aspects of the sacred and secular. "It has been used to separate not simply institutions of church and state but to encourage and advocate the separation of religion and society, and also moral viewpoints and culture so that it becomes a sword which cuts asunder the body politic, rooting out and separating public life from its moral and spiritual roots."

Today, Americans are paying the price for constructing the wall of separation of church and state so tightly that it keeps morals and religious values out of not only government but much of secular life, Buzzard said. He cited the deterioration of family life and rampant immorality as fruits of too-tight wall of separation.

"There are some elements in Baptist history which have perhaps in a tragic kind of way encouraged this (form of) separation," he said. "This has not been the best of Baptist tradition, but there have been moments in Baptist history when the individualistic and the separatist strands perhaps fostered by a frontier in revival history have encouraged that kind of notion."

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Values, not government,  
the solution, Bennett says

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
3/5/92

WASHINGTON (BP)--Only the right values, not larger governmental programs, will turn American society in the correct direction, former Secretary of Education William Bennett said in the opening address of a Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission seminar.

"It is much more important what ideas, what values are out and abroad in the mainstream than anything any government can do," Bennett said. "Government, for all the good that they may do, ... cannot undo" wrong ideas.

Bennett spoke March 2 at the CLC's 25th annual seminar, which had the theme, "Citizen Christians: Their Rights and Responsibilities." He served during the last decade not only as secretary of the Department of Education but as the drug czar and chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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He discussed three societal problem areas, drugs, education and the family. With each, he identified a wrong idea he believes led to the problem.

On drugs, Bennett pointed to an idea of the last 1960s: "Do your own thing. If it feels good, do it.

"There is no more perfect 'Do your own thing' thing than drugs," he said, "because when you start to do them, soon that is the only thing you will be doing."

On education, he cited a concept of the late '60s and early '70s: "There is no right curriculum." Moral relativism is the "most disastrous teaching" in recent decades, Bennett said.

"We can spend money, dollar after dollar, program after program, but unless we get that idea back that says there are things that are right and wrong and there are things children should learn, we will not fix American education," he said.

During a question-and-answer session, Bennett said, "... schools that work best in our country are schools that have a deep moral purpose underneath, undergirding the whole structure.

"It is not, as I read the complaints of my friends and colleagues who the press are calling the Religious Right, ... that their views are not being advanced in the schools. It is that their views are the only views singled out for contempt," he said.

The problem with the family, Bennett said, arose "when it became fashionable to talk about family as only one of the several possible ways of looking at our society -- not the best, not the most desirable, but only one option ... ."

Children "always pay the price" when wrong ideas are adopted, he said.

"What we do to children, one of the old Romans said, they will do to society," Bennett said. "Indeed, ... what we do to children they may end up doing back to us."

The battle over culture values "will be the debate in the next 10 years," and religion is the "great cultural divide," Bennett, who is a Roman Catholic, said.

"Anybody in politics who does not understand first and foremost that man is a moral and spiritual being will not have any idea how to address the most important problems ...," he said.

During the question-and-answer period, Bennett expressed the following opinions:

-- "Educational vouchers and/or tuition-tax credits giving parents the choice of where to send their children are necessary, and educational reform will not occur unless the financial monopoly of the public schools is broken.

" ... what this will represent is a shift in power from the National Education Association and the Blob (the education bureaucracy) to parents," Bennett said.

-- Schools should not teach sex education unless they can do it correctly.

"We keep telling children to feel comfortable with their decisions, as if the purpose of life was to be comfortable," Bennett said. "No where, it seems to me, do I read that in the New Testament."

-- Security devices are not the solution to the problem of violence in schools.

"The metal detector is to the use of violence in schools as the condom is to sexual behavior," he said. "They can't respond in terms of behavior; they cannot respond in terms of morality; they cannot respond in terms of principle; so they buy another piece of technology, as if technology can keep man from doing evil.

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"Metal detectors won't do anything ... they'll hit each other in the head with bricks."

-- The National Endowment for the Arts, which has been marked in recent years by grants to sexually explicit and sacrilegious projects, can be transformed if the chairman is willing.

"This is not hard to do," Bennett said. "You just get in there and you say 'No more of this.' The chairman of the NEH or NEA has a lot more authority than the secretary of Education or the drug czar. He's the one to stop it."

-- Term limitations for office holders should be adopted.

"The best argument, of course, for term limits ... is the people who pass the laws ought to leave occasionally and live under the laws they have made," Bennett said.

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Indianapolis housing still  
available; shuttle detailed

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press  
3/5/92

NASHVILLE (BP)--More than 6,000 rooms have been reserved for the 1992 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 9-11 in Indianapolis but rooms are still available, according to the convention manager.

"We have been assured by the Indianapolis people that there are plenty of rooms still available for the convention," Richard P. Rosenbaum Jr., said. Rosenbaum is vice president for business and finance for the SBC Executive Committee. More than 5,000 requests for room were received on Oct. 1, 1991, Rosenbaum said, and processing of those requests was not completed until Christmas time.

Rosenbaum also announced a shuttle bus system for convention-goers.

Christian Travelers of Des Plaines, Ill., will offer an hourly shuttle service to and from the Hoosier Dome, site of the annual meeting, to outlying hotels beginning Sunday through Thursday. The company, operated by Charles Cooper, an Illinois bi-vocational pastor, will also offer a service from the Indianapolis airport to the messenger's hotel, Rosenbaum said.

People having made early reservations for hotels in Indianapolis should be receiving their confirmations now from the convention bureau, Rosenbaum said.

"If you have reserved more than one room and do not intend to use others you have reserved, please turn in the extra reservations," Rosenbaum urged. Most of the early reservations are closer to the Hoosier Dome and could be made available to those seeking rooms but are now on waiting lists.

Rosenbaum said about 400 are on waiting lists, some asking to stay longer than the regular convention time of Sunday through Thursday. Some may have to take hotels/motels in a perimeter area but none more than 45 minutes from the downtown area, he said.

One of the problems with housing in Indianapolis, Rosenbaum explained, is the largest hotel, the new Westin across the street from the convention center, is not available for the SBC meeting. It was inadvertently booked for another convention by the hotel's national office while in the construction stage.

"We are trying our best to be objective and fair to the greatest number of Southern Baptists regarding housing for the annual meeting," Rosenbaum said. "Unfortunately, because of the limited number of rooms in Indianapolis, some people may not be happy with their reservation."

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Rosenbaum said the Hoosier dome is by far the best facility "we've been in, in terms of arena seating, exhibit space, support services and food concessions, both inside and in the food courts nearby."

And parking spaces near the convention center will be ample, unlike in Atlanta last year, Rosenbaum said.

The shuttle service should be helpful for those staying in perimeter areas. The shuttle buses will make six routes, to 90 percent of the outlying hotels, which should allow messengers to catch a ride easily to the convention meeting. The hourly service can be purchased in advance by calling 1-800-972-8952.

The passes will range from \$10 to \$25, depending on distance from the convention center, and will be effective Sunday through Thursday.

Christian Travelers also will provide a transfer service from the airport to various hotels. The cost is \$12 for service with a reservation, or \$15 upon arrival in Indianapolis. To order by mail: Christian Travelers, 501 West Golf Road, Des Plaines, Ill., 60016 or call 1-800-972-8952.

For those arriving in recreational vehicles and self-contained campers, space is available. For information contact Duane Floro, the local transportation sub-committee chairman, at (317) 841-9770.

Rosenbaum said there also will be adequate special parking at the convention center for physically disabled persons.

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Houston church graduates  
2000-plus in MasterLife

By Chip Alford

Baptist Press  
3/5/92

HOUSTON (BP)--Looking for a pool of well-trained, committed volunteers eager to get involved in lay ministry?

Graduates of MasterLife discipleship groups represent the best pool available, according to staff members of Second Baptist Church of Houston.

"God has blessed our fellowship with ministry opportunities which need to be staffed by called, committed and capable people," said pastor Ed Young. "It would be very difficult to hire the volume of staff needed to operate these ministries. So, we rely heavily on our lay people, and nowhere do we find a more solid base of volunteers than our MasterLife graduates."

MasterLife is a 26-week discipleship course for adults introduced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship training department in 1980.

Second Baptist graduated its 1,000th MasterLife pupil in 1989 -- only six years after the church began offering the Lay Institute for Equipping course as part of its discipleship training program, the Christian Life College. That total has doubled in the last three years, and the church is planning a "graduation party" on April 26 to honor its 2,000th graduate.

"I really believe MasterLife is one of the greatest tools available to help Christians develop and mature in their Christian walk," said Jackie Bond, discipleship director at the church. "It really gets back to the basics by teaching you how to pray, study the Bible, memorize Scripture and share your faith."

Avery Willis, manager of the board's adult discipleship training section, said he was not surprised Second Baptist was gleaning most of its leaders from MasterLife groups. Research has shown roughly one-fourth of those who enroll in MasterLife end up teaching the course to others, and "almost all of them end up involved in some type of lay ministry in the church."

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Second Baptist does differ, however, in its organizational and promotional approaches to MasterLife, Willis said. While most churches promote the course through their discipleship training program, the Houston church built and promotes its groups through its Sunday school.

"We have a discipleship coordinator in each Sunday school class and they are responsible for promoting MasterLife and enlisting new people. We felt it would be better to have people of the same age and interests in the same groups," Bond explained. "Our goal is to have a MasterLife group going for every Sunday school class. We're not quite there yet, but we're working on it."

In addition to the 25 MasterLife groups currently meeting each week at various times at the church, Second Baptist also sponsors two classes at the state prison in Huntsville, Texas. A MasterLife group for the deaf, taught by a deaf instructor, and one for Spanish-speaking Christians, also are scheduled to begin this month.

Bond said all church staff and lay leaders, including deacons and Bible study teachers, are encouraged to take MasterLife training. Several staff members have or are teaching groups themselves.

Dena Shacklett, director of health and wellness at Second's Family Life Center, said she discovered teaching was one of her spiritual gifts through taking MasterLife and now leads one of the discipleship groups for singles.

"Teaching MasterLife has been a great outlet for exercising my spiritual gift," she said. "It gives me the opportunity to see how God is working not only in my life, but in their lives as well."

Laura Harbour, assistant discipleship director at the church, not only learned from her MasterLife experience, but benefitted from the prayers of the MasterLife groups during a critical illness last year.

"My heart had been weakened from six months of chemotherapy I had needed to fight cancer," she recalled. "Then I got viral bronchitis which attacked my heart and threw me into congestive heart failure. I was really at death's door."

MasterLife groups meeting at the church each week continually lifted Harbour up in prayer and she eventually was released from the hospital.

"But when I got out, my heart was still damaged, and I wasn't sure what was going to happen," she recalled. "But Dr. Young and the MasterLife group coordinators gathered together at the church and laid hands on me and prayed for me. And the Lord really worked a miracle in my life. He restored my health."

Judith Daniels, a worker in the church's word processing department, said her life "took a 180-degree turn" after taking MasterLife.

"Before (taking MasterLife), I was in control. But this course really made Jesus Christ come alive to me," she said. "I know he's real. I ask for his guidance in everything I do now."

Since 1980, 175,000 copies of the course have been sold, according to Jimmy Crowe, senior adult field service unit supervisor for the discipleship training department. The course has been printed in 52 languages and distributed in 115 countries, he said.

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

Home Life's monthly counselor  
passes advice column to others

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP)--Imagine the emotions habitual readers of "Dear Abby" might experience if they picked up a newspaper and found the advice giver's syndicated column had been forever discontinued.

"Home Life" subscribers devoted to the monthly counseling column of Myron C. Madden will soon know the feeling.

Through no desire of its own, the family enrichment magazine produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board sheds one of its long-standing staples.

Madden has decided to call it quits after 27 years of offering Southern Baptists advice with a Christian perspective.

The 74-year-old pastoral counselor, who retired in 1983 as chaplain and director of the department of pastoral care at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, said he will pass the baton of writing Home Life's advice column on to others.

Beginning in May, Mike and Mary Stedham, Christian counselors from Abilene, Texas, will bestow their advice on Home Life's 680,000 monthly readers by responding to questions on family-related issues.

"For the last 27 years, I've been doing monthly issues for Home Life," Madden said from his home in New Orleans. "That's nearly a million people a month I've written to for 27 years. That's too much. It's time to give somebody else a chance."

Madden's final column appears in the April 1992 issue.

"Most of you have heard about all I know," he writes to readers in that issue. "My advice has not always been the best, but to the best of my knowledge and experience, I have given my best."

Madden's April farewell is an essay on the meaning of mature Christian love.

Madden, a member and former pastor of St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, has worked for all four editors of Home Life. When he first began writing his column in 1965 under the magazine's first editor, Joe Burton, the format was questions and answers. For 25 years, until 1990, he responded to personal questions from readers. In April 1990, Madden began writing on a specific topic each month.

"Madden has tackled thousands of difficult and sometimes controversial subjects, sharing insights with readers from his wisdom as a Christian counselor," Home Life editor Charlie Warren said.

Indeed, the questions have altered in the past three decades, Madden acknowledged.

"A liberalization of question asking has taken place over the years," he said. "Let's say people come across with a lot more personal stuff now."

For example, Madden said he often answers questions about homosexuality or extramarital affairs, topics that would rarely have been addressed 25 years ago. And, he answers many more questions from women than from men.

"Men have more problems discussing their problems because they (their problems) are deeper," Madden said. He said he believes men make an emotional commitment to their mothers early in life, and they spend the rest of their lives living up to that commitment.

He believes this so firmly, he is writing a book about it.

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"The title of my book is 'Sons of Mothers Who Have Never Become Princes,'" said Madden. "So many men who haven't separated from the vows made to their mothers when they were six years old become bogged down in midlife."

So he is writing a book to tell men how to release themselves from the commitments they made to their mothers as children.

Madden also writes and talks to the people he presently counsels individually about blessings. He equates blessings to freedom of children from the expectations of their parents.

"Blessing must be given (by parents) and received (by children)," Madden said. "Parents who give their children blessings love them for who they are not for what they do or say or earn or win.

"My passion is to help in my own blessedness and to help others to enter the awareness of their blessing and to accept the basic gift of the gospel, which is that we are loved just like we are. We don't earn it; we can't pay for it; it's a gift."

While pursuing his passion of revealing blessedness to the masses, Madden continues to counsel.

"I do about eight to 10 hours a week just to keep myself alive," said Madden, who in retirement continued to relate to the hospital as a consultant as well as serve as clinical professor of psychiatry at Louisiana State University Medical School.

Before writing his book this summer, Madden said he and his wife plan to travel to Colorado and then Taiwan.

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

Texas college president  
dies of heart attack

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MARSHALL, Texas (BP)--Robert E. Craig, who recently announced his retirement as president of East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, died March 4 of a heart attack.

Craig, 65, was president of ETBU for the past six years. He had surgery for the removal of his gall bladder the previous week and was recuperating at his home on the campus.

A memorial service will be held at the Rogers Spiritual Life Center on campus March 6. Interment will be in Mena, Ark., where he was born.

Craig graduated from ETBU in 1950 with a bachelor's degree and in 1951 with a master of education degree. He received the doctor of education degree from North Texas State University in Arlington, in 1957.

He previously was president of Southwest Baptist College, Bolivar, Mo., and Union University, Jackson, Tenn. He is married to the former Mary Jean Light of Pittsburg, Texas. The Craigs have four children: Candice, Cherie, Chris and Carey.

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College, seminary students hear call  
at Southwestern missions conference

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3/5/92

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--More than 750 college and seminary students from across the country were challenged to use "all means" to take the gospel around the world during the annual Student Missions Conference Feb. 28-March 1 at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

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Speakers during the conference emphasized the theme "By All Means" to urge students to reach the world for Christ. About 150 responded to that call during an invitation Feb. 29.

Phil Hunter, pastor of First Baptist Church of Ellisville, Mo., told the students that personal carelessness will prevent them from becoming all things to all people.

"Some of you are so careless you haven't had a quiet time in weeks, and you blame it on busyness. Next time you blame it on busyness, just call yourself a liar," he said. "You wait until a crisis hits in your life, you think you'll have time then?"

"Some of you allow trash every day to go through your mind, and you love Jesus with all your heart. You say, 'It doesn't bother me,' and when you say that, that's careless because you're calling God a liar. He says, 'whatever a man so thinketh, so he is.'"

Ton Wolf, pastor of the Church on Brady in Los Angeles, told the students "secular history is dominated by spiritual history. What we see is impacted by what we cannot see," Wolf said.

Wolf said Christians today face a critical time in history. Events in the world are moving toward Asia, he said, and Christians must be ready with the gospel.

Tillie Burgin, director of Mission Arlington, Texas, a multi-family housing ministry, reminded students their task is to reach people.

"What are we about today if it is not the people?" she said.

Burgin said reaching people involves taking the church to them, rather than expecting them to come to the church.

"We are so used to saying, 'Come to church,'" she said. "That's not what the scriptures say. They say, 'Go!' If you are not going to the people, then they are not going to hear."

Erwin McManus, president of Global Impact and a Southern Baptist home missionary, urged students to be "risk takers" for God.

McManus said risk takers for God see the world through "urban eyes. We have left our rural roots. I believe the Lord is calling us to the cities."

Risk takers must be willing to leave personal gain for kingdom advance and be willing to pour their lives into others, he said.

"We must move from programming to mentoring," he said. Programming is "mastering the material" while mentoring is "being material for the master."

The conference included small-group discussions with missions leaders from the Southern Baptist Convention and opportunities to talk with home and foreign missionaries.

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