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June 15, 1992

92-99

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the Baptist Press SBC wrapup story June 11 titled "SBC takes aim on homosexuality, Freemasonry, U.S. moral decline," please add the following paragraph after the 30th paragraph:

The 1992-93 SBC Cooperative Program allocation budget, as proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by messengers, totals \$140,200,395, down from the 1991-92 allocation budget of \$140,710,282. The SBC fiscal year is from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

EDITORS' NOTE: Please substitute the following revised story for the one with the same headline in Baptist Press June 15.

Abortion alternatives centers
offer hope for fears, stresses By Debbie Moore

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--Just 2 percent of abortions are for saving the life of the mother, mainly because of uterine cancer or ectopic pregnancies, or for rape or incest.

That figure helps Sylvia Boothe emphasize how rare the demand for abortion is in such cases.

Boothe, coordinator for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Alternatives to Abortion Ministries, noted: "Most abortions, 98 percent, are for convenience."

The ministry's booth in the Southern Baptist Convention's exhibit hall, June 9-11, featured a series of life-size models of a baby in various stages of pregnancy, all stages in which abortions are legal.

Upon viewing the models, passers-by responded with awe. "It's so tiny, but it even has fingernails," commented one teen-age girl to another when they stopped for a closer look at the 12-week-old fetus, barely 3 inches in length.

A mother of three said in amazement, "I didn't know their hearts were beating so early. I never considered an abortion but I would have felt differently about my babies from the beginning if I had known that fact when I was pregnant. ... A woman considering an abortion would have to realize she'd be murdering her baby if she heard that fact."

Five years ago the Home Mission Board asked Boothe, formerly director of a crisis pregnancy center in Oklahoma City, to coordinate a national crisis pregnancy center ministry. The purpose of the ministry is to "educate, motivate and equip Southern Baptists to become involved in long-term, positive ministry to those involved in crisis pregnancies," Boothe said. "This is not just a 15-minute visit for a pregnancy test. It can be a lifetime commitment with the women involved."

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Boothe, who is still in contact with several women five and six years later, has helped to provide training for 23 new centers through her new position. Currently there are crisis pregnancy centers in Texas, Oklahoma, New Hampshire, Georgia, Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas and Louisiana. Although training is provided by the HMB, each center is self-supporting and staffed by volunteers in the area. The ministry hopes to establish 10 centers every year.

Thirty million abortions will have been performed by next January -- the 20th anniversary of the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision, said Boothe, a former Foreign Mission Board missionary to Thailand and France. And many of those abortions were requested by Southern Baptist women.

Besides counseling on abortion alternatives -- either parenting or adoption -- volunteers at many of the centers also are trained to provide post-abortion counseling.

"We've got a lot of hurting people sitting in our churches," Boothe said. Those among the hurting are not only women but also men who fathered the babies, moms and dads who would have been grandparents and friends who suggested the abortion route.

They fear rejection if they reveal their secret. They feel stress from concealing their secret. "Part of our call as the church," Boothe said, "is to be approachable and to be instruments of God's healing and God's resources."

For the women who choose to raise their children in a single-parent situation, many centers help them find a way to finish their education, learn a trade "or whatever is needed to get their feet on the ground and get a new start in life," Boothe said.

The ministry headquarters in Atlanta has a database with information on nearly 5,000 pro-life ministry resources. The resources are not necessarily endorsed and if Boothe should learn one of the ministry resources does not have standards matching the Alternatives to Abortion Ministry, she will delete that file.

To obtain information on starting a center, to receive counseling or to locate a pro-life ministry in a particular area, call the Alternatives to Abortion office in Atlanta at 1-800-962-0851.

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(BP) photo available upon request from the central office of Baptist Press in Nashville.

Broadman hopes to find niche
with 'student-friendly' texts

By Chip Alford

Baptist Press
6/15/92

NASHVILLE (BP)--Taylor University professor Paul House had more than two dozen Old Testament textbooks on his office shelves but wasn't satisfied with any of them.

It wasn't that they were theologically off-base or filled with inaccuracies. The problem, House said, was they were written for a much different audience than his classes at the Upland, Ind., school.

"Most of the Old Testament surveys out right now are geared more toward scholars than students," the 34-year-old associate professor of Old Testament said. "Most college students just aren't on that level."

House isn't against scholarly texts; he insists on them. His argument is with the approach most current textbooks take in informing students.

"A lot of the surveys focus on history, background, dates, criticism and then very lightly on the text, but I think that's backwards. I have found that most college students don't know the Old Testament. They aren't reading it and it isn't preached very much. And if they don't know the text, they can't understand how it fits into Scripture as a whole."

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With this knowledge in mind, House decided to write his own textbook. His "Old Testament Survey" will be released in July by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman Press.

House takes a more literary approach in his survey than most religious textbooks. At the beginning of each chapter, he lists the plot, major and minor characters and major events of the Old Testament books covered in that section. He also discusses themes, symbols, poetry, prose and historical aspects of the biblical literature.

"I wanted to help my students see the practicality of the (Old Testament) writings," House said. "If you can get the students excited about the literature itself, that begins a lifelong process of reading and exploring the text for themselves."

Hoping to find their niche in the religious academic market, officials at Broadman Press are making specific plans to make all their textbooks more "student-friendly," said Trent Butler, manager of the Sunday School Board's Bibles and textbooks section.

"We have several different audiences in the academic market," he said, "from liberal arts schools and state universities to Bible colleges and seminaries. We are trying to make each of our writers aware of the need of writing for a specific audience, not just an academic audience in general."

To help develop books that can compete in the highly competitive academic market, Broadman established an academic council in 1990. The group, which includes editorial, marketing and sales personnel, meets twice a month to plan new books, discuss current book proposals and develop promotion strategies.

"We really want to reshape the curriculum of theological education," Butler said. "We need to make sure the content of our textbooks both informs students and provides practical help to those who are training for a career in Christian ministry."

While he admitted Broadman is in "the beginning stages" of accomplishing its goals, Butler remains convinced the Southern Baptist publishing group can emerge as a leader in the evangelical book market by the end of the decade.

Broadman's image already is being bolstered by the early success of "The New American Commentary," Butler said, referring to the 40-volume biblical commentary series it is releasing over the next six years. Sales of the first four volumes released have been ahead of forecasts, he said, adding two volumes were among the top 40 best-selling reference books for 1991.

Broadman is hoping its scheduled lineup of academic books during the next few years will continue to build on the commentary's success. Some of the future titles scheduled for publication include:

-- "Gods of this Age or the God of the Ages: Stemming the Tide of Resurgent Paganism" by Baptist theologian Carl F.H. Henry. Scheduled for release in the spring of 1993, this book is a call for America to make a choice between the Christian faith and practice or modern pagan philosophies.

-- "The Identity of Jesus of Nazareth," also by Henry. Scheduled for release in the fall of 1992, this study focuses on research on the life and meaning of Jesus Christ.

-- "Handbook of Contemporary Preaching" by Michael Duduit, editor of Preaching magazine and director of development and church relations at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. This collection of articles on the nature and methods of preaching is scheduled for release in January 1993.

-- "The Changing of the Evangelical Mind" by R. Albert Mohler Jr., editor of The Christian Index, newsjournal for Georgia Baptists. Scheduled for release in June 1993, the book contains 35 essays by the founding fathers of the current evangelical movement.

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-- "The Gift of Worship" by Southern Baptist pastor/writer/teacher Welton Gaddy. This book, which invites readers to rediscover the purpose and meaning of worship, is scheduled for release in July 1992.

-- "A Sure Foundation" by Winfried Corduan, professor of philosophy and religion at Taylor University in Upland, Ind. This Christian apologetics text is scheduled for release in July 1993.

-- "Introduction to Wisdom and Poetry" by Donald K. Berry, assistant professor of religion at Mobile College in Mobile, Ala. Scheduled for release in July 1994, this book is the beginning of a series of seminary and college texts on each major section of Scripture.

-- "Hermeneutics for Preaching" by Raymond Bailey, professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Set for release in December 1992, this book contains a collection of articles describing seven models for approaching the preaching task.

-- "Preaching from the Inside Out" by Charles Bugg, also professor of preaching at Southern Seminary. Scheduled for release in December 1992, this book focuses on the personhood of the preacher.

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Disabled Vietnam vet's wife
urges commitment by wives

By Debbie Moore

Baptist Press
6/15/92

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--"Honey, please don't leave me," said a man whose voice was the only thing left Deanna McClary recognized.

She was only 19 and married just six months when her husband, Lt. Clebe McClary, left their South Carolina home for the jungles of Vietnam, she told nearly 800 women attending the 37th annual Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives Conference and Luncheon during the June 9-11 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis.

Eight months later she received word her husband had received severe shrapnel wounds to all extremities, resulting in the loss of all his teeth, one eye and his left arm. The telegram read, "Prognosis very slim."

When she first saw her husband in his hospital room, she didn't recognize him and turned to leave until she heard his familiar voice begging her to stay.

After two and a half years of recuperation and 24 major surgeries, McClary and her husband began to feel their lives had taken on some sense of normalcy again -- as much normalcy as life without an eye and an arm could have. "Clebe, a military officer, an outdoorsman, a man's man, had to depend on me to get him ready ... to tie his shoes and button his shirt," McClary said.

"And I would rather be tying my husband's shoes than anything else," she said.

Statistics show over 80 percent of wives of Vietnam veterans left their husbands, she recounted. Some wives threw their wedding rings at their husbands as they lay on their hospital beds, she said, while others simply dropped them in the trash on the way out of the room, saying, "You're only half a man now," leaving their husbands physically and emotionally devastated.

Equating her experiences to traumatic events in marriages of couples in the ministry, especially the epidemic of forced terminations, McClary said, "Keep on standing next to your man in these days when everything seems to be turning against him."

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"Commitment is slowly giving way to convenience," said McClary, a native of Florence, S.C. "It's commitment that will make a difference in our future."

"Clebe and I took the word divorce out of our vocabulary. ... If you feel like quitting ... remember the key in life: Learn to give yourself away.

"People leave because they're unwilling to cope with life's high demand. ... Marriage is an investment. ... The more you give, the more you'll get.

"Don't say, 'I wish I could' You've got talents and gifts you've never tapped into," said McClary, a woman who always thought herself ugly and stupid while growing up. She has since won several beauty pageants, including first place in the Mother-Daughter of America pageant with one of her two daughters. She is also an accomplished Christian vocal artist.

"Weakness is nothing more than undeveloped strength," she said. "Begin to use your gifts. You never get tired when you use your gifts. ... Don't put off being the woman God has called you to be."

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Church faces competition
in search for volunteers

By Debbie Moore

Baptist Press
6/15/92

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--The secular world is beating the church in the race for volunteers.

The warning from Reginald M. McDonough, executive director of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, was voiced during the 31st annual Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions, which met in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention's June 9-11 meeting in Indianapolis.

McDonough, a former SBC Executive Committee and Baptist Sunday School Board administrator, stated, "We are in a competitive market for the time and talent of qualified volunteers." Cutbacks in government funding, along with increasing population and social needs, "have led to increasing dependence on volunteer service in our society."

"An estimated 400 volunteer clearinghouses have been established around the nation. Each of these agencies wants to recruit the very best volunteers. They continually seek ways to make their volunteer programs more attractive. Churches and associations cannot rest on their laurels and expect persons to volunteer out of duty," McDonough said.

"The idea that baby boomers and full-time employed persons are drawing back from volunteer service is a myth," he said. "Sixty-two percent of the 25-34 age group volunteered in 1989, according to Gallup, up from 54 percent in 1987. The issue is not whether boomers will volunteer. ... Our challenge is how to enlist and effectively utilize boomers in our programs."

"We must not assume that employed persons are shrinking from volunteer responsibilities," McDonough added. Seventy-two percent of part-time employees and 50 percent of full-time employees "reported they give volunteer service," he said, while just 45 percent of unemployed persons (including retirees and homemakers) reported volunteer service.

"We must not shy away from or apologize for going after employed persons," McDonough said. "They will remain the base of our volunteer force."

He noted "the motivation of today's volunteers goes beyond a sense of call and altruism. Today's volunteers do so to make new friends, learn new skills or even to get a job now or in the future. College students find volunteer service adds to the attractiveness of their resume. ... One person called the motivation of today's volunteer 'enlightened self-interest.'

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"While we must be careful not to cheapen the call to Christian service, I see no reason why we should not structure our volunteer service ... (so) persons can meet multiple needs. By helping persons develop or improve their knowledge and skill, we may make a valuable contribution to their life."

McDonough pointed to a recent wealth of information on the psychology of volunteers, "in the 'care and feeding' of volunteers. Frankly, in many ways the secular world of volunteerism has surpassed church-related organizations in the effectiveness of their methods and processes.

"I'm convinced we are laboring under the false assumption that we are the only experts in town regarding volunteerism. ... While we have numerous advantages in the competition for the best volunteers, we may be losing our edge because we are taking their service for granted and ... not keeping our methods up-to-date.

"Volunteers want to be involved in a system that is well managed," McDonough said. "Today's volunteers do not have patience with poor management. They consider their time and skill as important contributions. Professional leaders who do not arrive on time or who fail to have needed supplies on site are considered a personal affront."

McDonough also offered several suggestions for improving relationships with volunteers.

First, "Be specific concerning volunteer opportunities," he said. "The day of 'Y'all come!' is over. ... Today's volunteers want well-defined parameters."

Second, "Target specific groups for specific jobs," he said. Volunteers need to be divided into two groups: core and project volunteers. "Core volunteers are those who can give larger amounts of time and who are willing to accept a longer term of service. ... (They) require more personal enlistment, training, nurture and recognition. ... Project volunteers are short-term." Their assignments have a specific cause, with specific start and end dates and specific duties. "Boomers and employed persons are the primary targets here."

Third, "Provide for flexibility and choices," McDonough said. "Keep organization to a minimum ...; cultivate a group of core volunteers to man the positions ...; and use the 'Swiss cheese approach' (of dividing) one big job into several smaller ones."

Fourth, "Establish an associational volunteer clearinghouse and enlist one or more volunteer coordinators to run it," he said. Encourage volunteers to discover and use their gifts and talents but let some of them be in charge of keeping track of who can do what.

Fifth, "Establish a computer database related to volunteer activities" so skills and desires can be easily matched, he said, noting software packages already available for this task.

Sixth, "Work hard to improve the overall management of your volunteer system." Quoting from a recent Wall Street Journal article by Peter Drucker, McDonough said, "Increasingly ... volunteers do not look upon their work as charity; they see it as a parallel career to their paid jobs and insist on being trained, on being held accountable for results and performance."

Bringing the situation into the church context, McDonough said, "If we fail to provide quality enlistment practices, solid training, good supervision, effective communication and appropriate recognition, we will be left in the dust grumbling about how hard it is to find enough good volunteers."

Seventh, "We must offer adequate support services to volunteers," he said. "Child care, parking, modern machinery, adequate space, food service and adequate supplies are just some of the services that should be provided to maintain high morale and motivation among today's volunteers.