



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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July 24, 1992

92-117

Former Washington, D.C. pastor
Trentham killed in auto accident

By Art Toalston

ALAMOSA, Colo. (BP)--Charles A. Trentham, President Jimmy Carter's pastor at First Baptist Church in Washington, was killed July 22 in a triple-fatality afternoon auto accident near Alamosa, a south-central Colorado city 30 miles from the New Mexico border.

Trentham, 73, was pastor of First Baptist in Washington from 1974-79. The previous 20 years, he was pastor of First Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tenn. He had been pastor of Church of the Redeemer near Knoxville since the mid-1980s; the church is affiliated with the National Council of Community Churches.

Trentham's wife, Betty "Ann," 52, was driving when an oncoming car on U.S. 160 drifted into their lane and hit head-on. The Trenthams' car was struck head-on again by a third car. An airbag helped Mrs. Trentham survive the crash; she received only a broken ankle. A Missouri couple in the second car were killed; the driver of the third car was uninjured, according to the Colorado State Patrol.

The Trenthams had left a meeting of the National Council of Community Churches in Denver and were driving to Red River, N.M., to visit his longtime friend Foy Valentine, retired executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Carter, in a written statement, remembered Trentham as very helpful to him and his wife, Rosalynn, "as our minister at First Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., when I was president. We fondly recall his presence during some very significant moments in our lives, and we were honored to have him baptize our daughter, Amy.

"In the years since we both left Washington, his continued friendship has meant a great deal to my family and me," Carter said.

As a Knoxville native, Trentham "was much-loved and revered by the congregation and the community at large here," said Dave Ward, First Baptist associate minister who worked with Trentham nine years before he moved to Washington. "He was an outstanding speaker ... and very personable in his pastoral responsibilities," Ward said.

A 1941 graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., Trentham earned a master of theology degree in 1945 from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and a doctor of theology degree there in 1948. He also earned a Ph.D. degree from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland in 1950.

He was professor of Bible at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, in 1946 and professor of systematic theology at Southwestern from 1947-53.

Beyond his third wife, Ann, Trentham is survived by two sons, Robert, a Nashville attorney, and David, a medical researcher at Harvard Medical School. No funeral arrangements in Knoxville had been made at press time.

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Atlanta Baptists head
for Barcelona Olympics

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press
7/24/92

ATLANTA (BP)--One team traveling to Barcelona this summer will compete for something more valuable than gold.

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Four members of the Georgia Baptist Convention's Atlanta games ministry committee will be in Spain during the summer games to aid foreign missionaries in witnessing and ministries while gaining insight in preparation for the XXVI Olympiad in Atlanta in 1996.

"We want to learn some things, meet some people, make some contacts," said Bill Lee, committee member and director of special ministries for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Also traveling to Spain are Ray Johnson, committee chairman and director of the Georgia Baptist Convention's education division; Elmer Goble, HMB associate director of short-term volunteers; and Don Sewell director of special projects for the denominational relations department of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Many ministries during the Barcelona games will be geared to tourists and local residents, said Fred Dallas, a 12-year foreign missionary to Spain and coordinator for Southern Baptist work during the Olympics.

Baptists also are working with Laywitnesses for Christ International to designate a church as an international outreach center for the athletes, said Dallas, a native of Durango, Colo.

"It's providing them an opportunity away from the Olympic environment to relax, to worship, to be with other Christian athletes or to invite non-Christian athletes to a neutral setting," he said.

The number of volunteers will range from 80 to 200 during the 16-day event but sports-related ministries have been taking place since early April, Dallas said.

A church from Mississippi sent missionaries equipment for the newest summer games medal sport, baseball. Missionaries play a game with area residents in a park and then take advantage of the crowd to share the gospel, Dallas said.

Most of the ministries during the actual games will center on one-on-one evangelism, he said.

"Terrorism is such a threat we will not be able to get large groups together anywhere in the Olympic area," he said. "Police will move in and break up gatherings outside."

The group from Georgia will look for several things, Lee said, including types of Christian literature being distributed and the use of foreign missionaries with language skills.

"We'll want to look at their organization and compare it with the organizational structures we've had in Lake Placid, Los Angeles and Calgary," he said.

Georgia volunteers also will look at how Baptist workers relate to the Olympic organizing committee, Lee said. Four years ago, the chairman of the Olympic committee in Seoul, South Korea, was a Baptist deacon, Lee said.

Dallas said evangelism work has been difficult in Barcelona because of the Roman Catholic influence.

"We've had a lot of opposition from the Roman Catholic church, to be very honest," he said. "Once the word is out that evangelicals are around, Catholics either deny us permission or work through the local authorities where they have some of their connections and cancel our permission to do things."

The Olympics and other international events offer access to people from such areas as Arabic nations, where missionaries are unable to go, Dallas said.

"We can't put missionaries there but they'll come here and we can make sure we're aware of their presence here."

HMB working to see enlist
250 'key churches' by 1995

By David Winfrey

ATLANTA (BP)--A new Home Mission Board program hopes to enlist 250 Southern Baptist churches to sponsor five or more church missions by the end of 1995, the project director said.

Congregational starts and ministry programs are at the heart of the "Key Church" program, said J.V. Thomas, national director for the new Home Mission Board strategy.

Last year, 73 churches supported five or more churches or missions, according to the Baptist Sunday School Board's Uniform Church Letter survey.

The Key Church program offers resources and guidance to churches committed to supporting new congregations and ministry programs, said Thomas, who directed the project in Texas where it started in 1977.

"It is the most effective way of doing what we have said we want to do: evangelize, congregationalize and minister to the people of America," Thomas said.

The program also encourages stronger churches to assist their state convention or younger state conventions with church starting, said David Bunch, HMB assistant vice president for strategy development.

A key church, as defined by the program's outline:

- prioritizes missions to the level of the church's religious education or music programs.
- establishes a missions development council.
- elects a director or minister of missions.
- starts five church missions or ministry programs each year.
- sponsors at least five missions on a continuous basis.

Thomas claims it's logical to dedicate emphasis and resources to such churches because missions-oriented congregations are responsible for a large percentage of baptisms and Cooperative Program giving.

Texas's 45 key churches had 21,032 people in a Sunday school or Bible study class last year, Thomas said. The satellite congregations of those 45 churches were responsible for 9,375 baptisms the past two years, he said.

"When 45 churches have been able to reach 21,000 in Bible study in six, seven years time, that's a pretty good testimony," he said.

A study of 837 churches that had more than 1,000 members and sponsored at least one satellite congregation found that these 0.2 percent of Southern Baptist Churches were responsible for 21 percent of the total Cooperative Program receipts, 14 percent of all baptisms and 15 percent of all people in a Southern Baptist Sunday school program in 1990, according to the Uniform Church Letter.

The program also should result in the planting of more indigenous congregations in and around the church buildings of the older state conventions, Thomas said.

Areas of the oldest and strongest churches often are in transition, he said. While members drive from the suburbs back to church, the congregation should offer worship and ministries to the new residents living near the church building, Thomas said.

Bunch said the emphasis on ministry projects also will allow a church to publicly express its desire to minister to the community.

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"The church then begins to be perceived as a group of concerned people rather than an exclusive colony," he said.

Churches enlisting in the key church program will have access to planning and consultation work with state and national advisers as well as training conferences and seminars, Thomas said.

More information is available about the HMB's Key Church strategy by contacting Thomas at (404) 898-3002.

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SBC publishing board begins
executive management search

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
7/24/92

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board is seeking people to fill key leadership positions in five business-related areas, President James T. Draper Jr. has announced.

The search, including advertisements in cities known for concentrations of business and publishing companies and personnel, includes upper-middle management positions in Bible and book publishing, bookstores, advertising and marketing, distribution and business and finance.

Advertisements in Nashville's "The Tennessean," "The New York Times," "Philadelphia Inquirer," "Chicago Sun Times," "Grand Rapids Press," "Atlanta Journal-Constitution" and "Dallas Morning News" cite minimum requirements of 10 years of successful, high-level experience in the specified fields. The display ads, at a cost of about \$25,000, were placed by the board's human resources department.

"We want the best people available," Draper said, "and while, by law, we are an equal opportunity employer, we prefer to find Southern Baptists for these openings."

Steve Lawrence, the board's human resources director, said the board "operates under the 1972 amendment to the Equal Opportunity Employment Act which allows religious corporations an exemption from religious discrimination in choosing to reject a job applicant. However, the employer must be able to show that the requirements for a job are reasonably necessary for the performance of that particular job."

Draper said the board is looking for people who can support the board's vision statement and core values and who best match a leadership profile developed by one of several employee-staffed task forces for reorganizing the agency.

The vision statement is: "We will assist local churches and believers to evangelize the world to Christ, develop believers, and grow churches by being the best worldwide provider of relevant, high-quality, high-value Christian products and services."

The core values include statements on leadership, quality, people, performance, integrity and growth. An overarching statement for the core values is: "The foundation upon which all our values, processes, relationships, and policies are based is that we, as Christians, are personally committed to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and strive to be faithful to His Word."

Among the 23 characteristics included in the leadership profile are church and denominational knowledge, customer-oriented, strategic thinker, inspiring leader, business results orientation, interpersonal skills, innovative, sense of calling, general business knowledge and industry knowledge.

Advertisements similar to those in the daily newspapers will appear in trade publications such as "Book Store Journal," "Christian Retailing," "Publishers Weekly" and state Baptist newspapers within the next few weeks, Lawrence said.

Resumes with salary history and names, addresses and phone numbers of references should be addressed to Senior Search Committee, Baptist Sunday School Board, Human Resources Department, MSN 121, 127 Ninth Ave. N., Nashville, TN 37234.

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Court's refusal of RU 486
applauded by CLC's Land

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Supreme Court's denial of a woman's attempt to bring abortion pills into the country was a wise decision morally and medically, said the executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"RU 486 is an extremely serious drug which can lead to serious complications," Richard D. Land said. "In discussions I have had personally with pharmaceutical companies in France and Germany, they have acknowledged this drug must be used only when there is a very sophisticated health delivery system. Otherwise, the numerous women who will hemorrhage after taking the pill will face life-threatening situations.

"The (hormones and hormone-like substances) used in connection with this drug can have serious side effects," Land said. "Furthermore, psychological implications are great -- a woman has to live with her abortion for a week between the time she begins the process and the time it ends.

"In our meetings with the German and French companies, they assured pro-life representatives they would not seek distribution of RU 486 in any country where there was not a clear consensus in favor of abortion and they made it clear to us they did not expect such a consensus in the U.S. in the foreseeable future."

Land and 10 other pro-life leaders traveled to Europe in December 1990 to inform the pill's manufacturers of the extent of opposition to the drug's introduction in the United States.

The Supreme Court refused to overturn a Second Circuit Court of Appeals decision upholding the Food and Drug Administration's ban on the importation of RU 486 for personal use. Only Justices Harry Blackmun and John Paul Stevens dissented.

By confiscating a woman's abortion pills, Stevens wrote, the government had unduly burdened her method of receiving a constitutionally protected abortion. The majority expressed in its ruling "no view on the merits of this assertion." Such a claim was not addressed by the district court, court of appeals or the woman, the Supreme Court majority said.

Leona Benten of Berkeley, Calif., tested the FDA's three-year-old ban when she brought RU 486 pills into the country July 1. Federal authorities, who were notified by abortion rights advocates, confiscated the pills at a New York City airport. Benten was accompanied by abortion rights activists on her trip and in a prearranged press conference at the airport.

The Eastern District Court of New York granted a preliminary injunction ordering the government to return Benten's pills. The court of appeals, however, stayed the injunction.

Benten attorney's argued proper procedures had not been followed before the pills were confiscated. The Supreme Court said they had not shown a "substantial likelihood of success" their arguments for an exception in Benten's case would have succeeded.

RU 486 has been approved for use in France and Great Britain on women who are five to nine weeks pregnant.

Media attention to the case has been beneficial because it revealed "the medical dangers of RU 486," the National Right to Life Committee's Richard Glasow said in a written statement. "The technique has killed one woman and caused three life-threatening heart attacks" in Europe.

Comments were requested from the National Abortion Rights Action League but were not available at press time.

Land, others oppose
women's combat roles

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP)--Placing women in combat positions would threaten the United States military's effectiveness and harm the country's families, Richard Land and 11 other leaders of pro-family or pro-defense organizations said in a recent letter to members of a presidential commission.

Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, and the others said they hope the commission will agree with "the view of most Americans: that allowing women into combat means sacrificing the lives of our military men and women and devastating their families -- indeed, jeopardizing the nation itself."

The July 16 letter was sent to the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces. The commission is scheduled to make its recommendation Nov. 15 on whether women should be assigned combat roles in the U.S. military.

Indications are the commission will recommend allowing women at least to serve in combat roles in aircraft and on ships, according to a source familiar with the commission's deliberations.

Allowing women in combat positions, even in planes, is a bad idea for several reasons, Land and the others wrote, including:

- The possibility of women being killed or raped during a war.
- The emotional stress on children separated from mothers in combat units.
- The inability of women to perform at similar levels as men in combat roles.

"The evidence is conclusive," the letter said. "Women on average possess 30 percent less speed, strength, stamina, agility, and endurance. Yet, the U.S. Military has attempted to obscure these stark differences in performance."

The letter also said voluntary admission of women to combat positions would result in mandatory assignments of women to combat and the inclusion of females in the draft.

Some of the fears expressed in the letter were underscored recently when it was reported 24 women had filed complaints of being raped or sexually assaulted by fellow soldiers while on duty in the Persian Gulf area during 1990 and '91.

Among those signing the letter were Beverly LaHaye, Concerned Women for America; Gary Bauer, Family Research Council; Phyllis Schlafly, Eagle Forum; Col. Oliver North, Freedom Alliance; Don Wildmon, American Family Association; Paul Weyrich, Coalitions for America; and Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham, High Frontier.

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Alcohol should be priority
in drug war, Land advises

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press
7/24/92

WASHINGTON (BP)--The federal government should target alcoholic beverages and alcohol advertising to succeed in the war against drugs, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's executive director recently told the president's Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Until we "deal decisively and forcefully with alcohol in America, most of our efforts to curb the availability of illegal drugs will be nearly futile," the CLC's Richard Land wrote in a July 17 letter. "Our society is ready to take drastic measures against the powerful alcohol lobby."

In his letter, Land cited a Gallup poll showing 74 percent of adults support health and safety warnings in alcohol advertisements and nearly half favor a total ban on such advertising.

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Land's letter came in response to a request for input on the president's 1993 National Drug Control Strategy. Ingrid Kolb, acting deputy director of demand reduction, asked Land to recommend content and priorities for a strategy aimed at reducing the demand for drugs.

Calling alcohol a gateway to other drugs, Land mentioned some studies' findings reflecting the extent of alcohol's impact on the United States:

- By age 18, most children have seen 180,000 beer commercials on television.
- 85 to 93 percent of unwanted teen pregnancies occur as a result of the influence of alcohol.
- As many as 4.6 million teens between 14 and 17 are problem drinkers.
- An average of 300 people die daily from alcohol-related causes.
- An estimated \$85.8 billion annually is spent as a result of alcohol problems.

Bills requiring health and safety messages to be included in all alcohol advertising on television and radio as well as in newspapers, magazines and promotional materials have been introduced in both the Senate and House of Representatives. S. 664 received a subcommittee hearing in the Senate in April. H.R. 1443 received a hearing in the House in 1990. Neither bill has been acted on.

The Christian Life Commission has joined with health, anti-drug, education and other religious organizations to support the legislation.

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Chinese grandmas give
orphans loving touch

By Lounette Templeton

Baptist Press
7/24/92

NANJING, China (BP)--Four grandmothers in China have found a rewarding way to spend retirement: fluttering and fussing over orphaned babies.

"Grandma" Li Chengyao looks forward to going to work every morning to care for infants at Nanjing Children's Welfare Center. Some people wonder why she works when she's already retired. Li says she enjoys "touching and loving" the babies -- many abandoned because of birth defects or their female gender.

Li and the three other retirees -- who all have their own grandchildren -- do more than touch and love. Two are doctors and two are registered nurses. They give expert medical attention to their foster grandchildren. The center is home to 300 orphans -- newborns to age 14.

The Amity Foundation, a non-government Chinese organization providing educational and humanitarian assistance in China, sponsors the "grandmothers project." Amity was begun by Chinese Christians and other Chinese citizens wanting to aid their nation.

Cooperative Services International, a Southern Baptist aid organization, has provided resources and funds for a number of Amity projects.

Christians are especially equipped for social work in China because the government doesn't provide such services, according to Tan Liying. Tan administers Amity's social welfare projects that focus on rehabilitating the disabled.

"As Christians we naturally think of humanitarian concern for those who need help," Tan said. "In China, there are no trained social workers. The government takes care of the basic needs of people, but society is more complicated. We do have social needs."

Many Chinese don't understand handicapped people, Tan added. "There's discrimination against the handicapped, the retarded, those with birth defects. Even parents don't know better."

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The grandmothers don't discriminate, though. They cuddle and care for each infant with love only a grandmother can give. They spend six hours a day, six days a week with the infants.

A Nanjing hospital recently offered 64-year-old doctor Li Aizhen a staff position. But she prefers the orphanage job with its small stipend.

"I'm happiest when I see the children respond to my care," Li said.

She told about a child who couldn't walk or talk upon arrival. "The child needed the most basic thing you can give -- love." Within weeks the child was walking and talking. "I've helped five learn to walk," she related.

Ling Xiaohua, a nurse for 38 years, remembered another child whose parents reclaimed her after welfare center surgeons repaired the girl's cleft palate.

"I'm so happy to have a part in helping the children get a decent start in life," Ling said. She proudly showed off a plump baby with rosy cheeks who had just been adopted.

The fourth grandmother, Guan Qianxu, a doctor for 43 years, summed up the women's work: "We love the children, feed them, change their diapers, talk to them, hold them, give them exercise, make sure they are healthy and continually pray for them. We treat them just like our own grandchildren."

Tan enlisted the grandmothers from Nanjing churches because they would be "witnesses of Christian love," she explained. She felt babies would benefit most from a grandmother's love and care.

As a side benefit, she believed the grandmothers' presence would enhance the self-esteem of regular orphanage workers. Some Chinese look down on health care workers for the handicapped. The grandmothers give dignity to the job and encourage the staff, Tan reported.

"Amity has built a good reputation," she said. "Foreign churches give money that we use as they designate. We want to use the money wisely whether the amount is small or large."

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

Heart to hands to hearts:
Jordan touches deaf Japanese

By Janice Hicks

Baptist Press
7/24/92

TOKYO (BP)--After winter break, they saunter into the high school classroom with a mixed look of reluctance and playful anticipation.

Some slip quietly into their seats. Others slam their books onto their desks, as if adding a final punctuation mark to their holidays. The teacher begins by asking about the Christmas holidays. One by one they respond and get caught up in the responses of others.

The scene could be in any school anywhere. But this is Tokyo's Ohta School for the Deaf. The course is American Sign Language. And the instructor is Southern Baptist missionary Nan Jordan of El Paso, Texas.

To teach American Sign Language in Japan, the teacher obviously must know Japanese as well as Japanese Sign Language. Jordan knows all three. Furthermore, she teaches at two Tokyo schools for the deaf. She also hopes eventually to start after-school Bible clubs for the students.

Many of the students depend heavily on lip-reading. Usually they have no formal instruction in Japanese Sign Language. Japan's philosophy is to encourage the deaf to integrate into the hearing world.

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"Even their families rarely learn to sign," Jordan says.

The children are "mainstreamed" through elementary school but begin to fall behind and require special instruction by middle school. At their first encounter with other non-hearing children, they begin to pick up signing.

Often they are high-school age before they ever experience a school organized solely for them. Many say school is "heaven" when they finally begin studying with non-hearing peers.

"Part of the challenge with these kids is just convincing them they can learn," says Jordan, who has two grown children of her own. "These kids are smart but they need more encouragement because they're so far behind their hearing counterparts,"

Maeda, a boy in one of Jordan's classes, seemed more interested in clowning than trying to learn to sign. But after the students demonstrated their American signing skills in a play performance, Maeda stopped clowning.

"I can do it. I can really do it!" he said, explaining how he first thought he could not learn this new way of talking.

Jordan's interest in signing came years ago as she participated in a Girls in Action ceremony in El Paso, Texas. A young GA interpreted the missions program in sign language. That impressed Jordan. From that time on she wanted to work with deaf people.

Her dream became reality some years later when she attended Barksdale Baptist Church in Bossier City, La. The church had a deaf ministry and she began learning to sign. When the interpreter suddenly moved, Jordan became the "official" interpreter.

Her most embarrassing gaffe came one Sunday morning when she accidentally signed, "Our pastor is happy to be back from two weeks in hell." She had meant to say "on holiday."

Appointed a missionary to Japan in 1982, Jordan still had visions of working with the deaf. But when she asked her Japanese language teachers about learning Japanese and Japanese Sign Language simultaneously, her question was met with little enthusiasm. Not until five years later did the vision materialize.

Another missionary noticed a hearing woman practicing signing in a donut shop. He arranged for Jordan to meet the woman, who was studying American Sign Language. Jordan enrolled in night classes to study it also. Through contacts in that class, she later arranged to study Japanese signing.

A letter inviting Jordan to work at Shakuji School for the Deaf surprised her. She learned a stranger had recommended her for the job. The man, involved in the Japanese Theater for the Deaf, had heard of her ability to sign in both languages.

Jordan's ministry is an intricate tapestry in the making. She weaves the lives of her students into the picture.

Mika, a student at Shakuji School, rides the same city bus Jordan does. After classes each day the young girl waits at the school entrance for the American teacher.

The American teacher waits for the day Mika and other students will fit into the picture still on the loom.

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Hicks, a Southern Baptist missionary, is press representative for the Japan Baptist Mission. (BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

Sunday school quarterly
guides student to Christ

By Frank Wm. White

NASHVILLE (BP)--Without the plan of salvation printed in the front of a Southern Baptist Sunday school quarterly, Lisbet Ward would have had a difficult time in the early hours of her 21st birthday when she accepted Christ as her Savior.

"I don't know my way around the Bible real well. The sample prayer gave me a guideline," Ward said.

A student at William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Va., Ward had started attending York River Baptist Church at the invitation of a college friend. She enjoyed the few Sundays she had attended before going home to Big Stone Gap, Va., for spring break. "I was excited with the Sunday school lessons. They helped me understand the background," she said.

During the spring break at her home 500 miles from school, Ward missed her friends and the new church relationships she had developed.

"I had my Bible and Sunday school book (given to Ward by church friends) so I didn't feel totally alienated," she said.

Late on March 8, the day before her birthday, Ward heard a program on a Christian radio station that talked about Christ returning to earth and the importance of not waiting to accept him, she recalled.

"I went back to my Sunday school book for more information. I wanted to be sure," she said.

The inside cover of the January/February/March issue of Adult Bible Study had a personal presentation of the plan of salvation, Ward said. "It had the Bible verses to refer to. I used it to dispel any last doubts I had."

It was after midnight, during the first hour of her 21st birthday that Ward followed the sample prayer provided on the plan of salvation page of the quarterly.

All Sunday school periodicals and many other literature items from the Sunday School Board include a discussion of the plan of salvation on the inside front cover. The feature was added to literature beginning in 1987 to provide an additional evangelistic feature to the material.

Ward now is working through the "Survival Kit for New Christians," a discipleship guide for new Christians published by the board's discipleship training department.

In the fall, Ward will be entering her senior year at William and Mary College where she is majoring in English and anthropology.

This summer, she is a volunteer at Colonial Williamsburg where she works in the office of visitor services assisting disabled visitors. The past six years, Ward has used a wheelchair because juvenile rheumatoid arthritis has limited use of her arms and legs.

Bill Cashman, pastor of York River church baptized Ward on Easter Sunday. "The congregation was moved by her commitment to the Lord," he said.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press. Copies of the plan of salvation feature from the current quarter of Sunday school curriculum are provided for reprint by interested state Baptist newspapers.

How To Become a Christian

Have you ever wondered what the phrase "born again" means? In the Bible a man named Nicodemus approached Jesus at night. He was curious about Jesus and the kingdom of God. Jesus told him: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Nicodemus responded, "How can a man be born when he is old?" (John 3:4).

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Nicodemus was a highly moral man who obeyed the law of God. He was a respected leader of the Jewish community. No doubt he was a fine man. Yet something was lacking. Like Nicodemus, many people today confuse religion with new birth in Christ. Phrases like "I pray regularly," or "I believe there is a God," often are confused with a real new-birth experience.

New birth begins with the Holy Spirit's convicting someone he or she is a sinner. Because of sin, we are spiritually dead. For this reason, spiritual birth, as Jesus described it, is necessary. God loves us and gives us spiritual birth when we ask Him for it.

The Bible states that all people are sinners (Rom. 3:23). Jesus died on a cross to save sinners. To be born again means someone repents of sin, trusts Christ as Savior, and professes faith in Christ. Jesus told Nicodemus everyone who believes in (places faith in) Christ will not perish (John 3:16). Jesus is the only one who can save us (John 14:6).

To believe in Jesus is to be born again. Confess your sins and ask Jesus right now to save you. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). Then ask a Christian friend or a pastor to help you grow in the decision you have made.

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Reprinted from Single Adult Bible Study, July, August, September 1992, published by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

How to Become a Christian

Acceptance. Everyone wants to be accepted -- to feel in. You probably know what it takes to be accepted by friends. But have you ever thought about what it takes to be accepted by God?

Consider what the Bible teaches:

1. God loves you. -- John 3:16; 10:10.
2. You are a sinner in need of forgiveness. The Holy Spirit makes you aware of your sin. -- Romans 3:23; 6:23; Hebrews 9:27.
3. God wants to forgive you. -- Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 3:18.
4. You must turn away from your sins. -- Luke 13:5; Ephesians 2:8-9.
5. You must place your faith in God's Son, Jesus Christ. -- Acts 20:21; John 14:6.
6. You can receive Jesus Christ through prayer. -- Revelation 3:20.

Through prayer, you can:

Admit to God that you are a sinner and that you are turning from your sins. Believe in Jesus by thanking him for dying on the cross and rising from the dead for your sins. Commit your life to Jesus by asking Him to come into your life as your Savior and Lord.

After you have received Jesus Christ into your life, tell a Christian friend and follow Christ in believer's baptism and church membership.

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Reprinted from Sunday School Youth, July, August, September 1992, published by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

El plan de salvacion

Dios nos ama. "Mas Dios muestra su amor para con nosotros, en que siendo aun pecadores, Cristo murio por nosotros" Romanos 5:8.

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El pecado nos ha separado de Dios. "Por cuanto todos pecaron, y estan destituidos de la gloria de Dios," Romanos 3:23.

Dios nos llama al arrepentimiento. "Pero Dios, habiendo pasado por alto los tiempos de esta ignorancia, ahora manda a todos los hombres en todo lugar, que se arrepientan;" Hecho 17:30.

Dios nos asegura Su perdon. "Si confesamos nuestros pecados, el es fiel y justo para perdonar nuestros pecados, y limpiarnos de toda maldad" 1 Juan 1:9.

Confiese a Cristo como se Senor y Salvador. "Pues la Escritura dice: Todo asquel que en el creyere, no sera avergonzado...porque todo aquel que invocare el nombre del Senor sera salvo" Romanos 10:11, 13.

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Reprinted from Quietud, October/November/December 1992, a Spanish-language daily devotional guide published by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Answered prayers came
as thief in the night

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
7/24/92

DALLAS (BP)--The answer to Becky Taylor's prayers came as a thief in the night.

Taylor, director of the Christian Family Center in Corpus Christi, Texas, said she continually prays she will be able to share the love of Jesus with people in the low-income, high-crime neighborhood where she lives and works.

One morning last spring, she was awakened long before sunrise by the screeching and meowing of her cat. She soon realized it was in reaction to the presence of an intruder in the home she shares with her 86-year-old mother.

To her surprise, she found a young man undressing in her hallway. Recognizing him as Silas -- an alcoholic 34-year-old who lived seven blocks from the Christian Family Center -- called him by name and demanded to know what he was doing.

Silas insisted he was at home and just wanted to go to bed. Taylor recognized that the man was incoherent and attributed it to his drinking problems. Only later did she discover he was high on crack cocaine.

Eventually, she persuaded Silas to leave her home but not before he stole all of her bacon, eggs and bread as well as a kitchen radio.

Taylor called Silas' sister, letting her know what had happened and urging her to get Silas into some sort of program for addictions where he could be helped.

Before long, Silas returned to Taylor's house with her radio in hand, offering her an apology. Taylor, in turn, offered Silas a professional referral for his addiction problems and the grace of God's forgiveness, sharing with him the plan of salvation.

"Three weeks later, on the Friday before Palm Sunday, Silas came back to see me but this time he was clear-eyed and excited about what had happened in his life," Taylor said. Silas showed her the church bulletin from Genesis Baptist Church in Corpus Christi where his name was listed among those being baptized.

Taylor saw Silas' conversion as an answer to prayer. While the Christian Family Center -- supported by Corpus Christi Baptist Association -- had been successful in reaching isolated pockets of its surrounding neighborhood, its evangelistic outreach had not been able to penetrate the block where Silas lived.

"I had been praying for some way to open the door there," she said.

Although Silas has continued to have a difficult time since his profession of faith, he has faithfully attended church and read his Bible.

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"One day he was reading his lesson for Sunday school and it was about Paul and Silas. He was so proud to find out his name was in the Bible," Taylor said. "His low self-esteem wouldn't let him imagine his name could mean anything beyond the life he had known."

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Family has high degree
of support for seminary

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Baptist Press
7/24/92

STARKVILLE, Miss. (BP)--You could say the Lloyd family of Starkville, Miss., measures their loyalty to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary by degrees -- nine degrees to be exact.

It all started back in 1926, when Richard R. Lloyd Sr. received his bachelor of theology degree from the Louisville, Ky., seminary. The most recent family graduate is his grandson, Richard R. Lloyd III, who received the doctor of philosophy degree there this spring.

In between, family members have received seven other Southern degrees, according to R. Raymond Lloyd Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church in Starkville.

"Dad came from Pennsylvania to attend the seminary because of the strength and biblical nature of the institution. There is a high spiritual quality and fine quality of theological education at Southern Seminary," he said.

Lloyd Jr. carried on the tradition by attaining the bachelor of divinity degree in 1953 and the doctor of theology degree in 1960 but he may have had more interests as a student than just making good grades.

"I met my wife there," he said. Gretta Johnson Lloyd earned the master of religious education degree from Southern in 1954.

So when Lloyd III began contemplating his seminary choices after finishing at Samford University in Alabama, one institution obviously carried a lot of weight. He chose Southern. Would he have been disowned otherwise?

"I better not answer that," he replied.

"I was born in Louisville while Dad was finishing his Th.D. Many of the faculty members at Samford were from the seminary. There was no reason not to go to Southern," he said.

In addition to his recent doctorate, Lloyd III also received the master of divinity degree there in 1983 and master of theology degree in 1985.

Not to be outdone, Debra Heard Lloyd, wife of Lloyd III and fellow Samford graduate, received the master of divinity degree in religious education in 1983 and the doctor of education degree in 1990, both from Southern (where else?).

Seminary spokesman Pat Cole is confident the Lloyds hold the record for most degrees in one family.

"Five degrees in a family would not be uncommon, but nine degrees? Yes, that is very uncommon. The Lloyds have been very supportive alumni, too," Cole said.

Lloyd Sr., now 90, was in the ministry 65 years and now lives with his son in Starkville. Lloyd Jr. was recently honored on his 20th anniversary as pastor of the Starkville church. Gretta Lloyd has been a special instructor at the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary in Ogbomosho, Nigeria, and will return there in January along with her husband, who also will serve a short-term stint on the faculty. She is known around Mississippi for her work in WMU and church music projects.

Lloyd III is pastor of Upton Baptist Church in Upton, Ky., and Debra Lloyd is an adjunct professor in Southern Seminary's school of religious education.

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Lloyd III has a simple explanation why his family feels such a special bond with the school. "It is more than a seminary," he said. "It is a cherished place."

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Perkins is the new associate editor of The Baptist Record, Mississippi Baptists' newsjournal. (BP) photo available upon request from Southern Seminary.

Baptists join in protest
of lesbians' ad in paper

Baptist Press
7/24/93

AUSTIN, Texas (BP)--Six Baptists, including the executive director of the Austin area Baptist association, were among a group of Christians who held a news conference July 14 to protest an advertisement in the Austin American-Statesman announcing a "marriage" between two lesbians.

The news conference was called by Christian radio talk show host Jack Chambers, a member of Congress Avenue Baptist Church in Austin. Among the participants was Dale Gore, executive director of the Austin Baptist Association.

The Christian group said the newspaper's action amounted to an attack on the sanctity of marriage and would serve to desensitize the community to homosexual behavior.

They also maintained the ceremony could not have been a wedding because the Texas Family Code specifies that county clerks can grant marriage licenses only to male-female couples.

The Austin American-Statesman's publisher, Roger Kintzel, said the announcement was an advertisement and the newspaper's policy is not to discriminate against anyone on the basis of sexual orientation.

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The Baptist Standard, Texas Baptist newsjournal, provided information used in this story.

Fall reunion to celebrate
20 years of lay renewal

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
7/24/92

ATLANTA (BP)--A reunion to mark 20 years of the church lay renewal movement in the Southern Baptist Convention will be Oct. 28 to Nov. 1 at Toccoa, Ga.

Currently, 18,000 people are lay renewal volunteers, said Doyle Pennington, liaison for the Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission which jointly sponsor the renewal activities.

The church renewal process includes lay renewal weekends and lay ministry weekends. An average of 600 renewal events are held each year, Pennington said.

Lay renewal weekends are designed as inward journeys for churches to evaluate their roles, Pennington said. Lay ministry weekends help churches focus outward on responsibilities in their communities. Both events are led by lay people who share testimonies and lead in church services.

"The process is designed to awaken the laity and help them express their faith in Christ with a deeper commitment to his lordship individually and in the church," Pennington said.

The fall reunion will include Bible study led by Ron Barker, Home Mission Board associate director of associational evangelism, and discussion with Reid Hardin, HMB director of lay evangelism.

The reunion will be at the Georgia Baptist Assembly. Cost for adults is a \$25 registration fee plus \$125 for room and meals.

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A separate youth track will begin Oct. 30 and continue through Nov. 1. It will be led by Charles Shelton, Mission Service Corps volunteer youth coordinator from South Carolina. Cost for the youth track is a \$15 registration fee plus \$65 for room and meals.

To register or for more information, contact the HMB lay evangelism department at 1350 Spring Street, NW, Atlanta, GA 30367-5601.

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Broadman Press book
makes best-seller list

Baptist Press
7/24/92

NASHVILLE (BP)--A book published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board is listed by a national magazine as one of the country's best-selling Christian books.

"A New Day," written by singer/entertainer Anita Bryant, is number 18 in Bookstore Journal's August list of the best-selling clothbound Christian books. Published by the Sunday School Board's Broadman Press, the book details Bryant's recovery and healing following a divorce and a career collapse.

Distributed monthly by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association, the Christian best-seller list is based on actual sales in Christian retail stores in the United States and Canada. Broadman officials said Bryant's book has sold more than 40,000 copies.

The book's success represents a "great team effort" on the part of many Sunday School Board components and employees, according to Charles Wilson, assistant vice president for business at the board.

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CORRECTION: Please substitute these two paragraphs for the seventh and eighth paragraphs in the 7-16-92 BP story, "Seminary professor testifies in Kentucky right-to-die case."

Although this is thought to be the first "right-to-die" case to be heard in a Kentucky court, there have been other cases where families sought to remove life support systems, Simmons said.

The crucial point in this case, he said, is the withdrawal of hydration and nutrition, which is specifically excluded as a treatment that can be rejected according to Kentucky's living will statute.

Thanks,
Baptist Press
