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**SBC Cooperative Program gifts
up in January by 14.4 percent**

**Baptist Press
2/2/93**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for January were up 14.4 percent over the same month a year ago, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive committee.

January gifts totaled \$14,292,208 compared to that same month in 1992 of \$12,492,681, or an increase of \$1,799,527.

"Praise the Lord! Every Southern Baptist can rejoice in the greatly increased Cooperative Program receipts for January," Chapman said. "We cannot and must not be deterred from our primary purpose of reaching our world for Christ. The faithfulness of our Southern Baptist congregations is cause for heartfelt thanksgiving to our Lord."

The 1992-93 SBC monthly basic operating budget requirement is \$11,683,366. The current year's SBC Cooperative Allocation Budget is \$140,200,395.

For the fiscal year to date (October through January), gifts are up 3.91 percent over the previous year: \$47,764,008 versus \$45,965,592, or an increase of \$1,798,416.

Designated gifts also were up in January 1993 by nearly \$3.5 million. Those gifts totaled \$21,986,820 in January compared to that same month a year ago of \$18,495,616, an increase of \$3,491,204 or 18.88 percent.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, world hunger and other special gifts.

State and regional conventions retain a percentage of Cooperative Program contributions they receive from the churches to support work in their areas and send the remaining funds to the Executive Committee for national and international ministries. The percentage of distribution is at the discretion of each state or regional convention.

Baptist women explore ministry
opportunities at consultation

By Lydia Murphy

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Baptist women were called to "penetrate the culture with the gospel" during the third Women's Leadership Consultation sponsored by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Jan. 28-30.

Speaking to more than 200 women from across the United States and four foreign countries, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board consultant Esther Burroughs told participants at the consultation they must take the grace of Christ to the world.

"We're going to have to learn to get outside of our organizations, outside the walls of our churches and cross barriers to penetrate the culture with the gospel," Burroughs said. "Like Jesus, we must go out of our way on our way."

The consultation drew women from every corner of the Southern Baptist Convention, including several leaders of Woman's Missionary Union and the wives of denominational agency leaders.

According to Monte Clendinning, conference coordinator for Southwestern's World Mission and Evangelism Center, the consultation is designed to "help women develop organizations and ministries for women in their churches."

During the consultation, Clendinning asked the women to consider ministry alternatives offered by their local churches.

"Are we just frantically planning for this year and trying desperately to find leaders for positions rather than taking a long, long look at what we do?" Clendinning asked.

"Recognize that every woman in your church is important," Clendinning said. "She has needs and giftedness of her own. We are to encourage, to love, to learn from other women -- to help them find their way of making their greatest contribution to the body of Christ there."

Dellana O'Brien, national WMU executive director, told participants there is new interest among women for becoming involved in ministry.

"Women are wanting hands-on opportunities and the privilege of participating in endeavors that will provide the opportunity to see that they've really made a difference. There are many women who would like to be involved and make use of their skills and gifts but don't necessarily know how to do that," O'Brien said.

O'Brien said women today want the opportunity and training to minister. But she said many women lack the time for both.

"Our desire is that the opportunities women have will be the kind that will build them up, will edify them as Christian women, not only by way of preparing them for service, but actually getting them outside the church in doing those kinds of things," O'Brien said.

Becky Nelson, a consultation participant and pastor's wife, said Baptist women today are looking for ways to help other women "become Great Commission Christians."

"We are beginning to join hands. There are women out there for all of us to minister to. We can choose to be peacemakers, but I prefer to call us pacesetters," Nelson said.

"We are blazing new paths," said Betty Dilday, wife of Southwestern Seminary President Russell H. Dilday. "The consultation allows women to come together to understand each other and to try to work together."

Dilday said Baptist women have "always been strong leaders in the church. It's just that they never really cared about it being acknowledged. There are still hundreds of women who have places of leadership in the church who are unsung heroes."

Dorothy Patterson said women must be ready to take advantage of opportunities for ministry when God opens the door.

"Don't minister as serving people, but minister as to the Lord," Patterson, wife of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Paige Patterson, said. "Nobody wants to do it for the task itself, but do it as unto the Lord. There is a desperate need for equipping more women to be leaders in our churches."

But Patterson cautioned against what she called feminist theology.

"We have been drawn into the world's perspective and what it considers right and proper for women in leadership," Patterson said. "You can almost look across history and what is secular in the world makes its way into the church."

O'Brien told participants that regardless of the role individuals play in the church, cooperation is needed.

"Some plant, some water, some of us just pull weeds," she said. "But all of us are sent into the garden."

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Pastor says power of prayer
built world's largest church

By James Dotson

Baptist Press
2/2/93

MARIETTA, Ga. (BP)--The soft-spoken Korean pastor told how he prayed five hours a day when he started his first church in 1958. Today, he said, he spends at least three hours daily in personal prayer, as well as an additional hour leading an early morning prayer meeting.

That foundation has bred success. The pastor, keynote speaker for a conference on "The Growing Church" at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., was David "Paul" Yonggi Cho, pastor of the 700,000-member Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul.

The church -- the world's largest -- pioneered such established ministry concepts as home cell groups, serving as a model of church growth around the world. But Cho said the secret of success in his church, as well as others that have led one of the world's strongest revivals ever, is nothing new.

"Prayer is the key to church growth," he said during the opening session of the late-January conference.

The conference, which focused on church growth both in Korea and the United States, also featured Billy Kim, pastor of the 10,000-member Central Baptist Church in Suwon, Korea, and a friend of the Assemblies of God pastor.

Each Sunday at the Yoido Full Gospel Church, 15,000 to 17,000 people pack the main auditorium seven times for services, three of which include preaching by Cho. Hundreds of thousands of others watch the services by television in other buildings on the church campus or by live satellite broadcast at other sites throughout the city. The church sponsors some 240 missionaries around the world. One satellite congregation in Japan, a country not yet widely receptive to the gospel, has 5,000 members.

Cho said he began his first church in an old tent once owned by the U.S. marines in 1958. His focus on prayer came easy at that time, he said.

"I had nothing else to do," he said. "With only five members, it does not take much time to visit."

But the church grew rapidly. Within a few years he started another church, which had grown to 18,000 by 1974. It was then he began his current "pioneer" work, which has continued rapid growth.

One of the reasons for its growth and that of other churches in the country, Cho said, is the popularity of early morning prayer services.

Each morning, Cho said, his own regimen is to get up at 3:30 a.m., pray for an hour, then lead a half-hour Bible study and one-hour prayer meeting at his church.

"That kind of life is not easy. But you should sacrifice in order to have revival in your church," he told the pastors.

Cho told of a telephone call he received one morning from his mother-in-law, who he says has helped keep him committed to prayer.

"Shame on you. It's already 5 a.m.," Cho said she told him. "We are all waiting on you in the church. We are wondering if you're still Christian." Cho rushed to the church and took the platform, only to be greeted by laughter. He was still wearing his pajamas.

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Despite his candor, Cho said he has found the need for prayer time has increased as his church has grown. In 1979, he said, he was faced with increasing pressures of ministry that had forced him to cut back on his prayer life. His leadership -- consisting of 500 elders and 50,000 deacons -- had asked him to devote more time to visiting members, but he instead decided prayer was more important.

"Even though I was lacking in carrying out ministry to the people, I had such a power in my preaching that more people would come to the church," he said. "Even now, the more work is piling up on my life, the more time I need to pray."

It is through prayer, he said, the love relationship with God is maintained and the power of the Holy Spirit is renewed.

"Ministry to the people is very, very necessary, but far beyond that, ministry unto the Lord must be a priority in your life," he said.

But Cho said it is not the scheduling of time but the content that makes it difficult for many people to pray for extended periods. Usually, he said, an untrained person can pray for only about 30 minutes before running out of things to say to God.

He described several model prayers that have been helpful in his prayer life, including a prayer pattern based on the Hebrew Tabernacle, from the outer courts to the Holy of Holies.

"In my mind I just go through the whole Tabernacle and pray," he said. The bronze altar in the courtyard symbolizes the cross of Calvary and the shed blood of Christ, and he spends time in praise and worship to God for that gift. Other stops include prayer of confession, prayer for wisdom, reflection on the Scripture and praise to the Father.

"Those processes prepare me 100 percent to present my personal requests" as he reaches the Holy of Holies, he said.

He compared the regimen to a spiritual "jogging course."

Billy Kim, a Korean Baptist who often travels with Cho, said the focus on prayer is not unique to Pentecostals in Korea, nor is rapid church growth. The largest Methodist and Presbyterian congregations, with about 100,000 members each, also are in Seoul.

"Today we organize instead of agonizing on our knees before God. Dr. Cho is an ordinary man, yet God laid his hand on him. Why? Because a long time ago he found the secret to the power of prayer," Kim said.

The Koreans also are often more willing than American Christians to share their faith with others -- even to strangers on the streets, Kim said.

"If we get our American churches to do that I believe revival will come. But very seldom do you find American churches out there doing that because you are afraid you will offend," he said. "... The reason Paul Cho's church is growing is his people are everywhere."

Other speakers at the conference included a similarly diverse group of leaders in church growth, including John Ed Mathison, senior minister of Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church in Montgomery, Ala.; Michael Youssef, pastor of the nondenominational Church of the Apostles in Atlanta; Ron Lewis, founder of Church Growth Designs and pastor of Richardson Heights Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas; Don Hill, director of the Frazer Counseling Center in Montgomery, Ala.; and Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga.

Johnson Ferry staff also led seminars on their programs that have proven successful, including a 24-hour intercessory prayer ministry.

G. Bryant Wright, Johnson Ferry pastor, said the church began sponsoring the conference last year. "With the blessings that God has given Johnson Ferry, we would like to show, teach and encourage other ministers with new approaches and methods of teaching in today's world," he said.

Since it was founded as a mission of First Baptist Church in Marietta in 1980, the church has grown to an average attendance of 2,200 to 2,600 in worship.

Wright noted Johnson Ferry draws its membership from churches of different denominations, and there is value in seeing approaches to ministry that have been successful in other evangelical churches.

EDITORS' NOTE: The two following stories, gathered on a trip to Africa by Foreign Mission Board staff writer Don Martin, tell how the friendship between a Southern Baptist missionary and a young man from Malawi resulted in a media ministry which will impact the Yao people of Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania. They may be used individually or as a package.

Media missions starts
at grass roots level

By Donald D. Martin

Baptist Press
2/2/93

MAUDZU, Malawi (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Steve Evans grimaced as he waded into Lake Malawi's cold water.

When he turned to accept the first candidate for baptism, small waves rippled from his side and across the lake's polished surface. A steel blue haze on the horizon made it hard to see where the lake ended and the clear morning sky began.

Evans, from Seattle, and his friend, Jameson Mwenyeheri, a member of the Yao tribe, baptized eight new members for a new church. Despite the cold, Evans lingered waist deep in the water. With Mwenyeheri translating, Evans explained baptism to the congregation gathered on the shore.

The close friendship of the two men showed in the way Evans' words passed from English to Yao as seamlessly as the horizon shared by the lake and sky.

The two men approach their evangelism tasks from opposite ends. One uses the mass-media market; the other, the village market. But their goal -- reaching the Yao for Christ -- is the same.

Often no clear lines mark where Evans' work begins and where Mwenyeheri's ends. Evans' radio broadcasts in Yao reach these people daily, but he's quick to point out that he can't take all the credit.

"I felt a little like an impostor out there," he said after the baptism. "I can't make any claim to starting this church. This is Jameson's work."

Evans can't always define the boundaries of each evangelist's approach, but he's clear on how media ministries, such as the Yao project, can be most effective.

"You should have a purpose, not just an opportunity, when you begin," he said. "The value of the Yao project resulted from how much time was spent on the front end. When you go into a situation and actually start at the grass roots -- not with preconceived ideas -- you start with the people themselves."

Some early planners of the interdenominational Yao project envisioned reaching the 1.5 million Yao just through radio. But radio alone can never bring large numbers of people to Christ. Successful outreach involves layering one approach upon another, he said.

A person may first learn about Christ on the radio, then read about God's salvation plan in an evangelistic tract, he explained. Later the person may see a film about the life of Jesus and eventually talk to a Christian. Smooth transfers between evangelistic mediums is the key, he said. That happens when planners spend time researching how individual cultures use each media form.

"I've learned that we need to shape our ministries around the people and their culture," he said. "We need to know a lot about each society when we approach it with the gospel."

This sounds startlingly obvious. But Christian groups continue to retreat to rigid methods of the past in ministries around the world, despite vast cultural differences. Evans saw this problem in his own work.

"I've produced films and recordings and then asked, 'How am I going to use this?' We get involved in maintaining our ministries and working to keep our structures going and overlook the needs of the culture we've come to serve.

"But we must help meet people's spiritual needs and develop our resources accordingly. That could mean using radio, printed material, story telling or even dramatic dance," Evans said.

He brought these ideas to the Yao project. "We found with this project that radio would be very limited in its effect. The closer a person is to making a life-changing decision, the less value radio has in the process."

Radio's value diminished over the life of the project, but in the first years it was the star player: two daily 15-minute broadcasts into Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania over the Far East Broadcasting Company.

Foreign Mission Board leaders have decided to make the Yao project a model for other media missionaries. That pleases Evans, but he interjects a note of caution:

"Models are fine for the questions they raise, but they shouldn't become blueprints for other projects. If someone goes out and tries to duplicate this project, we've failed by making it a model.

"The idea is to say, 'Here's a project that worked. Here's the process planners went through. These are the patterns they had and the types of questions they asked.' But there's no step one, step two and step three. I wish it could be that clear, but it would never work from culture to culture."

All the project's elevated planning would have stayed in the stratosphere if it hadn't been grounded in the lives of people like Mwenyeheri.

"He was involved in the process," Evans said. "He got his village involved. They helped with the recording and knew they would be on the air. They were all caught up in this. When people at all levels get involved, you get results.

"That means forming relationships with people and sharing life experiences. I think that's what Christ did. He didn't set up appointments. He opened his life to the people around him.

"You can call it media ministries," he concluded, "but it's really what discipleship is all about."

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(BP) photo (vertical) mailed to state Baptist newspapers 1/29/93 by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutline available on SBCNet Newsroom.

Yao graveyard brings to life
a ministry and friendship

By Donald D. Martin

Baptist Press
2/2/93

MAUDZU, Malawi (BP)--It took a still graveyard to stir a friendship and a ministry to life.

Steve Evans, a Southern Baptist missionary from Seattle, met Jameson Mwenyeheri, a member of the Yao tribe, on the shores of Lake Malawi in 1991. The encounter marked Evans' entry into the Yao culture and Mwenyeheri's eventual entry into Christianity.

Evans had taken a break from meetings to join friends for the weekend at a lakeside hotel with thatched huts and a swath of sand for a beach.

During an afternoon walk along the shore, Evans paused with his camera to watch a few Yao children play. His head was packed with Yao demographics and intricate cultural details he would use in his ministry with the Yao Outreach Committee, an interdenominational group formed to reach the 1.5 million Yao of Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania.

But to the Yao around him, he was just another tourist wandering off the hotel compound.

"I had all this research and statistical information, but nothing was personalized," Evans recalled. "I was literally in the middle of the Yao, but I didn't have a way of gaining an entrance into the nearby village."

It was then that Mwenyeheri, a confident 28-year-old, spotted Evans and offered to show him things to photograph in the village.

Barely containing his excitement, Evans followed Mwenyeheri. As they toured, he mentioned he wanted to record Yao music for radio broadcasts. Intrigued, Mwenyeheri said he would check with the chief, his uncle.

Soon they passed a small graveyard where crosses marked a few graves.

"I was surprised to see that," Evans said, "and asked, 'Are there Christians here?'"

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"We're three kinds of Yao here -- Christians, Muslims and 'People of the Dance,'" Mwenyeheri answered.

Evans was hooked.

"I guess I'm a romantic, and this phrase, 'People of the Dance,' just grabbed me. It sounded so beautiful," he said. "I think that's really what sprung open our conversation. We started comparing each other's cultures and lives. We became friends."

The friendship grew as Evans returned time and again to the village.

He recorded Yao music and learned more about the People of the Dance, who uphold the tribe's traditional religion with its colorful dances, spiritual ceremonies and myriad of gods. He also saw how the People of the Dance bowed to the prestige of Islam and its hold on the Yao community.

Some Christian researchers question how deep Islam has penetrated the Yao. Ninety-five percent of the Yao are Muslim, and many say: "To be Yao is to be Muslim." But they usually mean a heavily modified, or folk, Islam -- a blend of beliefs more resembling tribal religion than a faith based on the Koran, Islam's holy scriptures. The lack of grounding in Islamic teaching doesn't necessarily make them open to the gospel, explained Braam Willemse, a South African Baptist missionary who works with on Yao Outreach Committee.

"They're extremely friendly and always prepared to listen, but that doesn't mean they're willing to change," he said. "They're just as hard, as far as the gospel is concerned, as any other Muslim group around the world."

Yet societal pressures have brought changes that demand new answers. A small but growing part of the Yao community questions traditions. And the Yao radio broadcasts intend to tap this growing need, Evans said.

The programs of music, discussion and drama, which started in March 1991, intend to stimulate an awareness of God and to present facets of the gospel. Listeners are encouraged to write to the program. The different mission groups involved in the project then use the letters for follow-up visits.

Most letters inquire about future programming and ask the broadcasters to lengthen the two daily 15-minute programs. However, other letters plunge straight to the project's ultimate goal.

"Although I am a Muslim, I encourage you to continue these programs, as they are blessing many here," one listener recently wrote. "Now that I am really convinced with the stories and the Word of God, I would like to be one of the believers of Jesus Christ. How can you assist me with this?"

Evans had no idea how close Mwenyeheri was to asking a similar question when they first met.

"The first time I returned to his village to record, we started talking about the Bible," Evans said. "He had studied the Bible in school, but he was not a Christian. I didn't press things, because I felt the first thing you don't want to do in a Muslim community is run people away."

But a few weeks later, Evans asked Mwenyeheri if he had thought any more about what it meant to be Christian. Mwenyeheri said he had not just thought about it, he had become a Christian.

"I was elated," Evans recalls. "But he didn't stop there." Within four months Mwenyeheri started a church in his village, which grew from four to 35 members in its first year.

"We (missionaries) spend years trying to do this stuff, and here he is starting a church in his yard with three people ready to be baptized."

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(BP) photo (horizontal) mailed to state Baptist newspapers 1/29/93 by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutline available on SBCNet Newsroom.

**Brotherhood leaders praised
for disaster relief efforts**

By Steve Barber

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Brotherhood leaders from 28 states received praise for their response following Hurricanes Andrew and Iniki while celebrating 25 years of Southern Baptist disaster relief ministry at their annual meeting Jan. 27-30.

"Although we might not always say so, we are aware of and appreciate the support that the Southern Baptist Convention provides to us," said Bobby Baines, American Red Cross disaster services external relations officer. "Hurricanes Andrew and Iniki tested our resources as never before. I want to thank you for your cooperation in responding."

The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has the primary assignment for disaster relief, providing funds and long-term response. State convention Brotherhood departments are responsible for implementation, while the Brotherhood Commission coordinates multi-state responses and represents the Southern Baptist Convention with other national relief agencies.

"Something like 4 million meals have been served, and thousands have come to know Christ" in south Florida, according to Cecil Seagle, director of Brotherhood for the Florida Baptist Convention. Seagle called the overall Southern Baptist response "phenomenal."

"We do not know exactly how many volunteers have been in south Florida," he said. "Our best guess at this moment is between 20,000 and 25,000 Southern Baptists have been working in Dade County (Miami). They have come by the hundreds and multiplied hundreds every weekend, and they're still coming."

As a result, 445 homes of uninsured and underinsured persons have been reconstructed, while 400 more have been surveyed for repairs, according to Seagle. He indicated a need for volunteers in Dade County for the remainder of 1993 and possibly longer.

Several veterans of early disaster relief efforts recalled their experiences in recognition of the ministry's 25th anniversary.

Bob Dixon, now director of Texas Baptist Men, recalled setting up a feeding center in Harlingen, Texas, in the wake of Hurricane Beulah in 1967. Dixon was state Royal Ambassador director and was called away from an RA camp in east Texas for the job.

"I'll never forget those early days because we didn't have any of these things that we have now. We used 'buddy burners' to fix breakfast. The first cooks were RA Campcraft instructors," Dixon said, adding that blue, not yellow, was the original clothing color for disaster relief workers. The color was taken from the uniforms RA instructors brought with them to Harlingen.

Later, the color was changed to bright yellow.

"The reason all of you have those yellow caps and jackets on (today) is because I couldn't find our guys in those blue uniforms."

Dixon noted the symbolism of today's SBC disaster relief logo, which includes a stalk of wheat and the sign of the fish.

"It says we go to minister to meet the needs of people, and we carry with us the power of real regeneration," he said.

"Why do we do what we do?" he asked. "Well, this coming Sunday morning there will be 14 churches and five missions of those churches open in Mexico City that didn't exist before the 1985 earthquake," adding that disaster relief units from Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas were a catalyst for all of them.

In other action, the state leaders:

- examined program and product plans for Challengers, which is set to replace the Pioneer Royal Ambassador and High School Baptist Young Men programs in local churches starting October 1994.

- reviewed the agency's 1993-1996 Corporate Priority Plan, which the board of trustees approved at their October 1992 meeting.

- honored retiring state Brotherhood directors Cliff Davis, West Virginia; Bruce Gardner, Utah/Idaho; W.C. Garland, Hawaii; Paul Harvey, Missouri; Paul McCullough, Oklahoma; and Elmer Whiten, Northwest.

-- welcomed new state leaders Jim Albers, Missouri; Pedro Aviles, Puerto Rico; Tom Bacon, Nevada; Hugh Cater, Florida; Curtis Griffis, Colorado; Don Hargis, California; Carl Kinoshita, Hawaii; Lonnie Reynolds, North Carolina; Gary Roberts, Florida; and Steve Stephens, Alabama.

-- heard reports on every area of Brotherhood work from members of the commission's Memphis staff.

The next Brotherhood leadership conference is scheduled for Jan. 26-29, 1994, in Memphis.

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(BP) photos of retiring and new state leaders with James D. Williams, Brotherhood Commission president, will be mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Brotherhood Commission.

Edgemon's personal experience
fuels BSSB focus on salvation

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
2/2/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--At 15, the only time Roy Edgemon had been in a church was to attend a funeral.

When he and seven friends wandered by Temple Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas, and were drawn toward the building by the sounds of music through open windows, Edgemon was not at first enthusiastic about going inside.

"That particular night, five of us were saved. To my knowledge that was the first time I heard the gospel," recalled Edgemon, director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division.

Of the five teens who became Christians that night, three, including Edgemon, went on to become ministers.

"That little church adopted us and ministered to us," Edgemon said. "Training union (now discipleship training) was my favorite time. I learned to pray. And training union sponsored a softball team. From then on, church was everything to me."

Out of his own experience and his conviction that too few Southern Baptists know how to bear witness of their faith, Edgemon believes the time is right in 1993 to emphasize the doctrine of salvation through the annual Baptist Doctrine Study. The emphasis will be observed April 19-23 in many churches.

"I really think this is one of the most neglected doctrines, though we don't like to say so. Creeping universalism (belief that everyone is saved) is rampant. Emphasizing the doctrine of salvation will bring us back to the focal point of Jesus' ministry. If this is not the center of our ministry, we don't have the same center as Jesus," Edgemon said.

He commended the adult textbook for the doctrine of salvation, which was written by Darrell W. Robinson, vice president for evangelism at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"Darrell really lives this in his life," Edgemon said. "The churches where he was pastor were always fast-growing and evangelistic. This is his lifestyle."

Emmanuel McCall, pastor of Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in Atlanta, agreed.

"While reading 'The Doctrine of Salvation,' I was convicted to make its chapters the focus for a series of Sunday morning Bible studies during a season of doctrinal study. This will produce a more evangelistically informed and active congregation," McCall said.

Baptist Doctrine Study is better taught than preached, Edgemon said. "People need to be able to study and ask questions."

In addition to the adult textbook in English, a Spanish textbook for adults and texts for other ages also are available. Resources include:

- Adults, "The Doctrine of Salvation" by Darrell W. Robinson.
- Spanish, "La Doctrina de la Salvacion" by Rolanda Gutierrez.
- Youth, "New Life: The Doctrine of Salvation" by Lavonn D. Brown.
- Older children, "Jesus, My Savior" by Judy Latham.

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- Younger children, "Jesus Loves Me Too" by Lou Heath.
- Preschoolers, "I Learn About Jesus" by Peggy Ward.
- Teachers, "The Doctrine of Salvation -- Teaching Workbook" by Roy T.

Edgemon.

A free Baptist Doctrine Study poster/brochure may be ordered from state convention discipleship training offices.

Textbooks may be purchased from the board's customer service center or through Baptist Book Stores.

Since its reinstatement in 1978 as an annual emphasis, Baptist Doctrine Study has focused on topics such as God, the church, biblical authority, priesthood of believers, lordship and the Bible.

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

1990s church media libraries
celebrate 50 years of history

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
2/2/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--"There should be a library," wrote B.W. Spilman in 1902. "The Sunday School should help to direct the reading in the right direction."

Spilman, field secretary for the Baptist Sunday School Board at the time, was not the first Southern Baptist to believe churches should have libraries. Messengers to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention had identified a need for libraries as early as 1890, and when the Sunday School Board was a struggling 1-year-old in 1892, the SBC instructed it to work in the field of church library service.

Progress was slow, and it was not until 1934 that the first library textbook, "The Church Library Manual," was approved for publication.

The pivotal year, however, was 1943, when at a called meeting of Sunday School Board trustees the church library service was authorized.

While early church libraries acquired an almost uniform reputation as dark, dusty museums with outdated books, their successors have become "media" libraries, reflective of the variety of contemporary resources used by their customers, said Mancil Ezell, director of the church services department which includes the church media library program. No more do users accept musty archives to meet their needs.

Library directors of the 1990s, with skills and ministries far different from their predecessors, began paying homage to the past during training conferences in 1992 and through their professional journal, "Church Media Library Magazine."

This year's golden anniversary will continue to be celebrated at the Church Media Library National Seminars, March 25-27 in Nashville and April 23-24 in Los Angeles, and for the final time at the Sunday School Board's national conference centers in Glorieta (N.M.), Aug. 6-13, and Ridgecrest (N.C.), July 9-16, during Church Media Library Leadership conferences.

"In touching lives with media, it is the using -- reading, thinking, viewing, learning -- that fulfills the library's purpose," Ezell said. "Today, the church media library is serving a new generation of media users who have unique views from previous generations, especially regarding media formats.

"For this reason, church media library collections are moving intentionally toward a wide diversity to meet the needs of inquisitive, searching minds," he continued. "Because a church must have an effective ministry in Christian education and evangelistic programs, organizational leaders and media library staff must work together in providing these services vital to the total church life."

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Copies of the church media library program's 50th anniversary logo are being mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the BSSB bureau of Baptist Press.

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