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**Criswell discusses SBC strife,
future of First Baptist, Dallas By Ferrell Foster**

**Baptist Press
2/4/93**

BENTON, Ill. (BP)--W.A. Criswell, 83, one of the giants in Southern Baptist life, stirs strong opinions among others. Some hold him in highest honor, almost seeming to revere him. Others ridicule him, almost despise him, for his role in a controversy that has ripped the convention.

The senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas preached during the Southern Illinois Bible and Evangelism Conference Jan. 17-19 in Benton.

A man of strong convictions, he speaks with both energy and tenderness. That is how he responded to questions about the SBC controversy during an interview with the Illinois Baptist.

An unabashed "fundamentalist," Criswell has provided much of the theological inspiration to "conservatives" who now control the Southern Baptist Convention.

Now that the controversy has been decided, how does he feel about what has happened?

"About 99 percent of the time I cannot understand what is happening," Criswell said. "Now that may be a strange thing to say, but it is all so different than when I was growing up.

"I've always thought of Baptists as being people of the Book. Jesus wants us to accept him as Savior. Jesus wants us to be baptized. Jesus wants us to be faithful in our relationship to him through the church, through the congregation. All of those things, to me, is what it is to be a Baptist.

"All of this division I cannot understand," he continued. "And the teaching in ... so many of our universities I cannot understand. When a teacher avows that the first 11 chapters of Genesis are mythological and legendary, when a teacher will teach that Jesus did not rise from the dead physically, that it is a spiritual resurrection, and when a teacher avows that the Bible is full of contradiction and mistakes and errors, I do not understand. I cannot enter into it.

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"When professors in the university and when preachers in the pulpits avow those things that I have just mentioned, ... I have a sadness of heart that is almost indescribable."

Criswell said he realizes many moderates do not hold such positions regarding Genesis and the resurrection of Christ. But he asked in a soft, pleading voice, "Then why do they champion those people who do say those things?"

"Many of those moderates are just as I am, and I'm just as they are," he added.

In a now famous remark during a 1988 sermon, Criswell likened moderates to skunks. He said he didn't plan to make the remark. "It just came out of my mouth. ... I grew up with the word liberal, and all the years of my upbringing you had conservatives and liberals. Well, this nomenclature of a moderate was new, you know, and so I made the remark just on the spur of the moment that a skunk by any other name still stinks."

Has the SBC controversy been worth it all?

"The sadness that has come to me in it is the loss of our institutions and the breach that is created between some of our dearest, sweetest pastors and people," Criswell stated. "That to me is a tragedy."

What does he see for the future?

"I may be mistaken in this but I have always felt that the great body of our Baptists would stay ... in the confines and organized life of the Southern Baptist Convention as we have it now, the Cooperative Program, the seminaries, our great mission enterprises, our Sunday School Board, our mission boards," he said. "I've always felt that the great mass of our churches and our pastors would follow in that train."

Why does he think some Baptists feel uncomfortable with the new leadership?

"That's a mystery to me. I cannot understand it. The breach that has been created between the so-called moderates and the conservatives is largely in the attitudes of the people involved. Many, many of them basically believe the same thing and love the same programming. It carries with it an overtone of sadness that is almost inexplicable."

The pastor's sadness also reaches to his own congregation.

First Baptist in Dallas was rocked last year by the sudden resignation of pastor Joel Gregory. He complained the transition from Criswell's leadership to his own was taking too long.

"I cannot understand Dr. Gregory. It's beyond my imagination. ... I cannot understand why he resigned," said Criswell, who has not spoken with Gregory since the resignation. "It broke my heart."

People in the church are discouraged, the senior pastor said. Weekly worship attendance has fallen to about 2,500 from a high of about 5,000 a couple of years ago.

The drop has brought yet another disappointment. After 25 years of broadcasting its worship services on TV in Dallas, the church had to drop it at the end of December.

Criswell described the final day of broadcasting as "one of the saddest days of my life."

"It was a matter of money," Criswell stated. "The church has so gone down in its financial response." It cost about \$14,000 a Sunday for the air time.

The future of the church depends on the incoming pastor, he said.

"If the church is able to bring into the leadership, into the pulpit, a wonderful man of God, in five minutes all of this in these recent years will be forgotten," Criswell said. "It depends upon that pastor, and that's why I pray day and night that God will bless that search committee in wisdom in seeking that leader for our people."

A pastor search committee of four men and four women is now "assiduously working" to call a new pastor. And, Criswell said, "the church is in prayer as I have never seen it."

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"I no longer enter into the administration of the church," the senior pastor said. "Whoever comes is going to be 100 percent the leader, the pastor and the pulpiter ... I'm a fellow member of the church, and that's all."

Criswell now focuses his attention on Criswell College, he said. "I'm at the college, and until I die I'll be at the college."

These are difficult times for Criswell's church and denomination. And, he said, "If not for my faith in God I would be indescribably despondent." But make no mistake, he believes in the "ableness of God to bless."

That does not mean, however, all will turn out as he might wish. Criswell noted the "death of witness" to Christ in parts of the world where it once was strong, such as Western Europe and England.

In the midst of it all, the aging leader still preached with a power and forcefulness that seized the attention of pastors and lay people who attended the event at Immanuel Baptist Church in Benton.

And, as a mark of his stature among Baptists, people stood in line for his autograph after each service. Others grabbed moments of his time for quick photographs by his side.

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Louisville association
drops invitation to Parks

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press
2/4/93

LOUISVILLE (BP)--Long Run Baptist Association, which encompasses metropolitan Louisville, Ky., has rescinded its invitation to Keith Parks to speak at its annual meeting next fall.

The association's annual meeting committee made the decision, committee members reported.

Parks was president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board from 1980 until his retirement last Oct. 31. About a month later, he was named missions coordinator for the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Associational leaders declined to elaborate on the decision to disinvite Parks. "It was a decision made by the committee," said Jim Carpenter, pastor of Woodland Baptist Church in Louisville and chairman of the annual meeting committee. "I personally would rather not talk about that."

Russell Bennett, the association's executive director, said he did not attend the committee's meeting and was not privy to its discussion.

But Bennett confirmed the chronology of the process: The committee extended its invitation to Parks after he announced he would retire from the Foreign Mission Board but before his retirement date. The committee chose to rescind its decision after Parks announced he would join the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, which some people see as competing with traditional Southern Baptist causes.

Committee members felt Parks' presence on the annual meeting program "would cause too much disturbance," said one committee member who asked to remain anonymous. "All of us felt sorry it had to happen, but I don't think there was any dissension."

Parks resonated with the committee members' sadness. "I'm not upset or angry," he said. "I'm just saddened that this is another symptom of what's happening in our convention."

He added he would have tried not to be divisive, had he spoken to the association. "In meetings like that, I try to present a missions message and sound the note I did as president of the Foreign Mission Board -- that we need to be inclusive and not exclusive. There's room for all of us, and more to do than we all can do."

With speaking engagements scheduled into 1996, Parks said he has received four cancellations since he joined the CBF.

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Lesbian rights activist named
to HUD post; CLC 'concerned'

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Bill Clinton again signaled his intention to break new barriers for homosexuals when he recently appointed lesbian rights activist Roberta Achtenberg as an assistant secretary in the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

If confirmed by the Senate, Achtenberg will become the highest-ranking openly homosexual official ever to serve in the executive branch.

The president named Achtenberg assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity. She is a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

In the 1980s, Achtenberg not only was a civil rights attorney and law school dean but served as executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights and as the directing attorney of the lesbian rights project of Equal Rights Advocates Inc.

"This appointment is disturbing but not at all surprising, given the enormous influence the homosexual lobby has had on the Clinton campaign, transition team and now the new administration," said James A. Smith, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's director of government relations.

Achtenberg was a national co-chairman of the Clinton for president campaign.

"It seems as if there's no request by the homosexual lobby that Bill Clinton is not willing to fulfill. We are extremely concerned about the appointment of a woman whose lifelong career goal has been civil rights advocacy for homosexuals to any civil rights enforcement position in the government," Smith said.

Clinton's Feb. 2 appointment of Achtenberg followed by four days his announcement of a process which would result in a draft executive order lifting the ban on homosexuals in the military. The deadline for Secretary of Defense Les Aspin to present the order to the president is July 15.

Achtenberg lives with Mary Morgan, presiding judge of the San Francisco Municipal Court, and their 7-year-old son, Benjamin, The Washington Times reported. The women will not disclose which of them is the biological mother, the paper reported.

Prior to her election to the San Francisco board in 1990, Achtenberg was a civil rights attorney, law professor and law school dean at the New College of California School of Law.

She serves as chairman of the San Francisco board's Housing and Land Use Committee.

Some civil rights activists are considering opposing Achtenberg's nomination because of her inexperience in the field of housing discrimination, The Washington Post reported Feb. 4.

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Child advocates urged
to take action in Texas

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
2/4/93

AUSTIN, Texas (BP)--The director of the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect challenged about 1,000 Texans to make sure elected officials "hear the cries of the children" who are hurting.

David Lloyd of Washington spoke to an overflow crowd at Austin's Town Lake Radisson Hotel on Children's Advocacy Day, Jan. 27. The event was co-sponsored by the Texas Coalition for the Prevention of Child Abuse, the Child Abuse Prevention Network and the CARE Coalition.

The CARE (Children: Abused, Rejected, Endangered) Coalition is a statewide group of more than 50 organizations, including the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, committed to children's issues.

Quoting Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem, "The Cry of the Children," Lloyd pointed to the plight of the more than 2.5 million children in the United States who are known victims of abuse.

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Roughly one child in four in the nation is reared by a single parent. One child in five lives in poverty. And far too many are born developmentally impaired due to a mother's abuse of drugs and alcohol, Lloyd said.

"If we do not hear the children weeping because we have closed our ears to their cries, then we soon will hear no one at all and our democracy will not survive," Lloyd said.

"If we choose to close our ears, that moral disability will preclude us from achieving the promise of our nation."

Lloyd praised those who hear the "silent, inward cry of the abused child" and seek to rescue them as if plucking them, one by one, from a raging river.

"But we need to walk upstream and find out who is throwing the children in the river. We need to focus on prevention," he said. "We must inform and mobilize our communities, and then point our leaders upstream, insisting that they protect the children from being tossed into the river."

Phil Strickland, director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and chairman of the CARE Coalition, addressed the problem of the "hidden Texas," turning again to the metaphor of a river of pain.

"We've created a hidden Texas. Behind the skyscrapers and beyond the freeway flow a river of folks who are poor, hurting, homeless and sick," he said.

While he praised Gov. Ann Richard's budget proposals for health and human services as a great improvement over the recommendations of the Legislative Budget Office, funding is still inadequate, Strickland said.

A "problem of priorities" is at the heart of Texas' consistent ranking near the bottom in funding of programs to aid the poor, he maintained.

"This crisis of neglect is not an event. It's a pattern. We've been doing it for years. Each session, the poor and needy in Texas seem to stand last in line, getting what is left, which is never much," he said. "Meeting human need has not been a priority, and for that we pay a significant price."

A minimal price can be paid now, or a maximum price will be exacted later, Strickland said. Texas can choose to pay:

- \$1 now for childhood immunizations or \$10 later in health costs.

- \$1 now on comprehensive maternity care for pregnant women or more than \$3 later in health costs.

- \$1 now for quality preschool education or nearly \$5 later for special education, welfare and other costs.

- \$1 now on food and nutrition counseling for pregnant women or more than \$3 later in Medicaid costs due to low birthweight babies.

In less directly measurable terms, Texas also pays a price for its "misplaced sense of priorities," Strickland said.

"If we fail to respond to the needs of our children, we pay heavily in the long run," he said. "It's not just a coincidence that Texas has minimal children's services and a maximum jail population -- minimal services and maximum poverty -- minimal services and maximum child abuse."

"Children should be first in line, not at the back of the line, in determining funding priorities. It is to the benefit of the state and society at large to begin with the children."

To correct the skewed priorities and budgetary inequities, concerned Texans must take the initiative, "own the problem" and communicate with their state legislators, Strickland said.

"We are all making these decisions -- perhaps by our silence, but we are participants nonetheless," he said. "If we can meet the basic needs of hungry, abused and sick children with no new taxes, fine. But let's see that the needs get met, whatever it takes."

Russian students study
at Southern Seminary

By Lori Galloway

LOUISVILLE, Ky.--For Russian pastor Peter Lokotkov, studying at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary fulfills what he had thought was an "impossible dream."

"Ten years ago I had a dream in my sleep that I came to America. It was an impossible dream. Now I can hardly believe I'm really here," said Lokotkov, one of eight Russian ministers studying for one year at the Louisville, Ky., school.

The pastors are studying at Boyce Bible School, a division of Southern Seminary that trains ministers who do not have college degrees. They are being sponsored by the seminary and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Selected to participate by his senior pastor or a group of his peers, each minister originates from a different district of the Russian republic. None knew each other before boarding the plane in Moscow. The group is diverse, ranging in age from 17 to 37. Three are married, each leaving behind large families.

Each arrived in Louisville in July with only one suitcase filled with just a few articles of clothing and their Russian Bibles and dictionaries.

Several seminary staff members and students have helped ease their transition to American life. Elisabeth Lambert, vice president for student services, and Pamela Galloway, a missiology student from Hockessin, Del., led efforts to buy clothing and tend to other everyday needs. The Russians quickly dubbed them "Mama Beth" and "Mama Pamela."

The ministers met their first challenge immediately -- the English language. All arrived with some training in English but with differing abilities to speak the language. During the brief summer months before classes began in September, they took an intensive English course taught by Anna Sud, a native Russian and Louisville school teacher.

Sud quickly noticed something special about her students. She said she had never met a group of young Russian men "whose hearts are as good as these men." The daily six-hour lessons produced rapid improvement in their command of English.

Each minister possesses a deep knowledge of the Scriptures acquired through a persistent dedication to learning in the face of years of persecution.

Lokotkov, one of the group's senior members, immediately requested an English Bible to help him learn English. Familiarity with the Russian Bible, he said, will help him learn faster. Asked how many times he has read the Bible through, he replied: "I am sorry to say, I have only read the Bible through 22 times. By now I should have read it 36 times because I am 36 years old."

When Galloway suggested that perhaps the Scriptures are more precious to him because he has endured political oppression, Lokotkov responded, "It is not a matter of political freedom; it is because I love my God, and I want to read his Word."

The Russians quickly adjusted to their home on campus, making friends with many students in the dorm. Yet a deteriorating economy and uncertain political situation in Russia have caused anxiety. Said one, "We feel guilty enjoying so much food and fellowship when our families back home have so little."

Lokotkov, father of four children under age 5, received a letter from his wife two months after his arrival that cast a shadow over the whole group. "All I have is rice and potatoes," she wrote. "The children cry for you and ask for ice cream. I have no money for even butter and milk and no winter clothes for the children."

Galloway organized a community effort to collect clothes and money that were carried to Lokotkov's family last fall by some Louisvillians who attended the Billy Graham crusade in Moscow.

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In January, the Russian students visited the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta, where they received an introduction to chaplaincy, a review of church planting and church growth, an overview of evangelistic materials and a tour of a mission center in a local housing project. In addition, HMB leaders sought opinions from the Russian pastors about ministry among Russians living in the United States. The Russians also spoke with an HMB interfaith witness specialist about evangelism among Mormons, a growing sect in Russia.

In spite of the trials at home, the pastors have had a positive impact on their American hosts. Gennady Sukhorukov greets each new person he meets with a warm smile, often saying in a thick Russian accent, "Please tell me about your faith." While attending a church softball game, Gennady Podgaisky and Gennady Formalnov witnessed to a 16-year-old Russian girl in the bleachers.

Seminary student Jeff Vickery, pastor of Poplar Ridge Baptist Church in Bedford, Ky., said, "They've shown me that God is alive and working in ways I take for granted living in the United States. They've opened my eyes to new avenues for service in my own backyard."

In a time of special sacrifice and opportunity, each pastor feels God's hand at work in his life. Igor Khlinov said it best: "It is a miracle we are here."

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Sarah Zimmerman contributed to this report. (BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

Augusta church to sponsor
new Moscow congregation

By James Dotson

Baptist Press
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AUGUSTA, Ga. (BP)--Volunteer mission trips to the former Soviet Union have become almost routine as the region has opened to Christianity, but Curtis Baptist Church in Augusta is taking its commitment one step further.

In an arrangement coordinated through a Louisville travel agency specializing in partnership missions, the church is sponsoring a new church in Moscow.

The project, which has been endorsed by the Foreign Mission Board, will include financial support, a commitment to regular partnership missions trips and prayer.

John Bryan, pastor of Curtis Baptist, said the involvement grew out of a series of trips he has led to the region, most recently in October, when he led a team of 34 people to assist in preparation and follow-up for the Moscow Billy Graham Crusade. During the crusade, he said, 45,000 professions of faith were recorded.

While there, Bryan said, he was approached by Wayne Dehoney, a former Southern Baptist Convention president, about sponsoring a congregation in Moscow. Dehoney now operates a travel agency that specializes in volunteer missions trips.

Bryan said Dehoney had been asked by Vasily Logvinenko, president of the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Russia, to help find sponsors for a new church in each of the 29 municipal districts in Moscow.

Bryan said he and others at Curtis had been dreaming of such a project for more than a year. "We've been praying that we would have more of an impact than just come and go," he said.

The spiritual hunger expressed in the crusade, he said, particularly revealed the extent of the need for churches in Moscow, which for years had only one central official Baptist church.

"The question comes back to the churches of America and the world: Who will nurture and disciple these converts?" he said. "It's a compelling challenge for Baptists to plant new churches right now."

During the trip, Bryan's team was involved in street evangelism and distribution of Bibles and gospel tracts on the streets, outside the coliseum during the crusade and in subways. The response, he said, was far from the indifference one might find in the United States.

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"We learned enough Russian to where we could say, 'Please take this; it is a gift,' and they would be able to respond to it instead of thinking they were going to have to buy it or have some other obligation," he said.

"I would say one out of maybe 25 people refused to take the literature. ... Never was it thrown down, never was it left in the seat of the subways, everything we gave them they took with them."

The overall church-starting project -- called Mission Moscow -- is being coordinated by Heritage Travel in Louisville, Ky., operated by Dehoney. Kathy Evitts, the company's president, said it was simply a response to an immediate need.

"Their souls are empty and there is such a need for churches," she said. "There is leadership coming up, there is leadership being trained, they have a Bible school there, they are trying to meet the needs, and as people are coming to know the Lord they are needing to find churches," she said.

Mission Moscow offers two levels of involvement for churches, she said. On one level, a church will agree to financially sponsor a church for at least one year. For \$3,000, she said, a church can support a pastor, pay rent for meeting space and contribute toward the salary of a coordinator who would fulfill a role similar to that of a director of missions. On a second level, a church will agree to support a church through regular partnership missions, a longer-term commitment that ensures continued follow-up and support for five to six years.

Thus far, she said, about six churches -- including Curtis -- have agreed to both levels of support. Twenty-two churches have committed to the financial sponsorship, she said.

"Churches have been started in offices and homes, and yet one of the bad needs is financial resources to help them with this effort. Three thousand dollars to us is a drop in the bucket but to them that it is a lot of money," she said.

Bryan noted Curtis already has helped one congregation get started in Mombassa, Kenya. Although the church is now self-supporting, it still carries the Curtis Baptist name and the mother church occasionally helps out with special projects.

He said the Moscow church probably will develop in a similar manner, eventually becoming autonomous.

"I continue to remind our people that beginning a church does not mean building a building. Beginning a church is establishing a group of people, ministering to them and having them minister to others, who will in turn bring others to Christ and disciple them," he said.

Bryan added the new interest in partnership missions has not meant a decrease in the church's support of the Foreign Mission Board's efforts. In 1992, he said, the church collected nearly \$82,000 for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, far in excess of its \$66,000 goal.

"Missions consciousness was at a real high in our congregation," he said, noting the effect of recent missions trips. Also, he said, the fact that a member of their congregation, layman Roy Scarborough, is a member of the Foreign Mission Board has helped them stay abreast of needs.

"Too many churches are moving away from their support," Bryan said. "We decided we would move closer and be more bold."

Sam James, FMB vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, said although the project was not initiated by the FMB, it does fit in with FMB goals of starting new churches throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States. A key element of that strategy is sponsoring home missionaries to start new churches in all 15 countries.

"We would certainly want churches to consider the work of the Foreign Mission Board and the overall strategy of the Foreign Mission Board (in their giving) ... but for churches that want personal involvement and want to give over and above their Lottie Moon gifts, this is certainly a valid missions cause," James said.

Seminary notes encouragement
still drawn from Broadus' words By Pat Cole

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--John A. Broadus' oft-repeated quote, "Suppose we quietly agree that the seminary may die, but we'll die first," has been an encouragement for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for more than 125 years, a Southern professor said in a Founders' Day address at the Louisville, Ky., school.

Broadus' famous lines were uttered after the Civil War when the four founding faculty members were trying to decide whether to reopen the fledgling school.

"The words expressed the considerable devotion of dreamers to their dream," said Raymond H. Bailey, professor of Christian preaching, in the Feb. 2 address. "Those words provided motivation in many periods of crises for this institution; indeed, inspiration in times like these."

Broadus used his diverse gifts as biblical scholar, administrator, educator and preacher in the service of Southern Seminary from 1859 until his death in 1895, Bailey said. "For good or ill, he believed in institutions and their potential for the greatest good for the most people -- particularly he believed in this institution in which he played such an important role in its birth and early development."

Broadus chose to remain at Southern despite offers to teach at the University of Chicago and Brown University, Bailey said, adding Broadus also refused an invitation to become president of Vassar College.

While Broadus was a man of multiple talents, his greatest contribution, particularly beyond Southern Baptist circles, was in the field of preaching, Bailey said. "His book, 'On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons,' was the preeminent homiletics text in the United States for over half a century." Broadus was, until a few years ago, the only Southern Baptist to deliver the most prestigious preaching lectures in America, the Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale University, Bailey said.

As a Bible scholar, Broadus shunned "the careless treatment of Scripture produced by superficial familiarity," Bailey said, noting his dual emphasis on the Bible and preaching was a natural one. "Broadus stressed expository preaching, not in the sense of tedious verse by verse commentary, but with the understanding that the preacher's task is to explain the passage. Every sermon should be true to the text."

Broadus' philosophy of education was shaped by his alma mater, the University of Virginia, Bailey said. "He brought to theological education the elective system and the English study of classical subjects. Broadus' notion of an educated person was undoubtedly formed in the shadow of Jefferson. An educated person, according to Broadus, is broad minded, able to see different sides of a question." Broadus, Bailey noted, also underscored the importance of a liberal arts education for ministers.

A close friend and confidant of the seminary's first president, James P. Boyce, Broadus was the logical person to be named president upon the death of Boyce, Bailey said. Broadus, who served as president from 1889-95, was a "strong president" who had to spend much time raising money, Bailey said. "His goals for the seminary required money. He worked hard to attract the support necessary for an expanded faculty that would allow for lighter teaching loads and more time for research."

During convocation, seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt announced his appointment of Diana S. Richmond Garland as dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work, effective Aug. 1. Garland will succeed C. Anne Davis who last fall said she would step down from the deanship to devote more time to teaching and writing. Davis, a faculty member since 1970, has been dean since the founding of the social work school in 1984.

Garland, a social work professor at Southern since 1980, now serves as the C. Edwin Gheens associate professor of Christian family ministry. She also directs the seminary's Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry.

Also during convocation, Timothy P. Weber became the 187th person to sign the original copy of the Abstract of Principles, Southern's statement of faith signed by every tenured faculty member since 1859. Weber, who had been on the faculty of Denver Seminary since 1976, was elected David T. Porter professor of church history last spring by seminary trustees. He began teaching duties at Southern in January.

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Diana Garland named
Southern Seminary dean

Baptist Press
2/4/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Diana S. Richmond Garland has been named dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary effective Aug. 1.

Garland, a social work professor at the Louisville, Ky., school since 1980, succeeds C. Anne Davis who announced last fall she would step down from the deanship to devote more time to teaching and writing.

Davis, a faculty member since 1970, has been dean of the Carver School since its establishment in 1984. While she was dean, Southern became the nation's only seminary to offer a fully accredited master of social work degree.

Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt announced his selection of Garland as dean Feb. 2 during a Founders' Day service opening spring semester classes at Southern. A native of Oklahoma City, Garland earned the B.A., M.S.S.W. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Louisville. She has authored, coauthored or edited 10 books and has written numerous articles. Her books include two works on marriage which she coauthored with her husband, David E. Garland, professor of New Testament at Southern.

Diana Garland currently serves as C. Edwin Gheens associate professor of Christian family ministry and directs the seminary's Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry.

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Families need time, energy,
commitment, conference told

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
2/4/93

AUSTIN, Texas (BP)--Healthy families have spiritual resources, take time for each other, make family a priority commitment and are willing to respond to their "unhealth" when necessary, according to Bill Turner, pastor of South Main Baptist Church in Houston.

Turner provided interpretation of the theme, "Families and the Family of God," at the annual conference of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission's annual conference Feb. 1-2 at First Baptist Church in Austin.

"Busy lifestyles can be a convenient dodge, providing an accepted escape from spending time and experiencing closeness with our nearest neighbors -- our family," he said.

Healthy marriages are built on commitment, conflict resolution and communication, Turner said. And healthy parenting happens when parents clearly understand their identity, consistently live out their faith, treat each other with loving respect and are willing to "be there" and "be real" for their children, he said.

"Making time for a child is a way to say, 'You matter.' Jesus was a special child, but someone had to tell him that and show him that," Turner said.

Mary and Joseph apparently performed all the traditional Jewish rituals in their family, having Jesus circumcised and dedicated as an infant and bringing him to the temple at age 12. In the same way, families should establish their own rituals, Turner said.

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"Rituals matter. They are an occasion for quality time. Rituals may get old. They may be burdensome. But rituals reinforce the sense of specialness in our children by giving them significant chunks of our time," he said.

Strong families have cohesion, flexibility, good communication skills, shared spiritual beliefs and the ability to resolve conflicts, according to David Olson, director of the marriage and family therapy program at the University of Minnesota.

"Most of the problems with individuals and society either begin or end up in the family," said Olson, a Lutheran layman and president of the National Council on Family Relations.

Proper preparation before marriage and consistent enrichment opportunities throughout marriage are key ingredients to successful families, Olson said.

"Marriage these days is a very high-risk venture. Yet, people enter into it voluntarily -- again and again and again. Our society values marriage and intimacy but doesn't know how to maintain it," he said.

Olson suggested the creation of couple support groups -- "a caring community of couples" -- in congregations to provide preparation training for couples entering marriage and ongoing enrichment for themselves and others.

Children deserve a healthy start, according to Sharon Daly, director of community and government affairs of the Children's Defense Fund in Washington. Full funding for Head Start and full immunizations for every child by age 2 are among the goals of the Children's Defense Fund in 1993.

Daly was keynote speaker at a breakfast held in conjunction with the GLC conference. The early morning meeting drew more than 70 members of the Texas Legislature and a number of legislative aides.

"We must act fast to make sure the effects of the economy do not permanently damage another generation of children," she said. "It's awfully hard to make children aware of the wages of sin when the wages of virtue are so slim."

Phil Strickland, Texas GLC director, challenged Texas lawmakers to "take a hard look at putting children first in the funding process."

Strickland also urged legislators to:

- see that sex education programs in public schools are abstinence-based and do not encourage sexual activity.

- support initiatives for automatic revocation of a driver's license of any person arrested on a DWI charge.

- oppose the further expansion of legalized gambling in Texas.

"Legalized gambling is not the solution to the problems in this state," Strickland said. "We all want to build a solid structure for the future of our children in this state. A Las Vegas, Texas, has no place in that blueprint."

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(BP) Brites
Compiled by Art Toalston

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Pastor liked his deluxe seat -- until ...

BRIDGETON, Mo. (BP)--In a frantic rush to catch a flight for a speaking engagement, Frederick Haynes III was dismayed to find his seat in the economy section had been taken by another passenger. Haynes, pastor of Friendship-West Baptist Church in Dallas, speaking during Missouri Baptists' evangelism conference, said his dismay turned to delight when he was given a seat in the deluxe section -- until he found out the airplane wasn't bound for the right city. "The devil does not mind you riding first class," Haynes said, "but he's going to make sure you're on the wrong plane."

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He believed in God; God believed in him

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)--Maurice Graham committed his life to Christian service at age 16 despite having dyslexia and speech difficulties. He later became chaplain at St. Jude Children's Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., then a Southern Baptist worker in Kuwait (where, after Iraq's August 1990 invasion, he was among the Americans held hostage in the U.S. Embassy). "God always looks at our abilities, not our disabilities," Graham, now associate pastor of Bon Air Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., told a Baptist Men Convention in Columbia, S.C. "God always believed in me more than I could ever have believed in myself."

Pastor also is 62-year-old law student

OXFORD, Miss. (BP)--At age 62, Joe Lovelady has completed his first semester of law school at the University of Mississippi. Lovelady, pastor of East Edgewater Baptist Church in New Orleans, decided to tackle a law degree because churches are sued so often these days. He and his wife, Betty, live in Oxford during the week and return to the church each weekend. When fellow students have asked, "What are you doing here?" Lovelady says he responds, "I just wasn't ready to die yet."

Jackson later met his 'best friends'

MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--Richard Jackson admitted "I never wanted to be pastor of a Baptist church to start with," during Alabama Baptists' evangelism conference. Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church in Arizona, continued: "I wanted to be an evangelist or a military chaplain -- something that didn't have a WMU and a board of deacons. But you need to understand that in 35 years I've learned the best friends I have are deacons and WMU ladies, so I was just stupid."

Getting 'full' at church isn't enough

DEL CITY, Okla. (BP)--It's OK to get full at church, Tony Evans, pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, told the Oklahoma Baptist evangelism conference. But: "The only reason to get full is to get empty again. We are not here to be nice little Christians, but to tell that the Messiah has come." He added: "When a man's soul is ready for heaven, you have to make his life ready for earth. ... A gospel that brings people to Jesus Christ and doesn't develop them into disciples is a limited gospel."

Families should provide nurture

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Nurture is the principal purpose of families, said Ben Loring, pastor of First Baptist Church in Amarillo, during a bivocational/small church ministers-wives seminar in Texas. Families should nourish a person intellectually, emotionally, physically, relationally and spiritually, he said. The key to open, intimate, initiative-taking relationships that make family members feel valued is communication, or "shared awareness," he said. "Communication is the functional glue of relationships. It is also the wedge that will drive us apart if it is not experienced."

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Also available upon request:

-- Feature by Mark Wingfield on a couple's spiritual journey with stops in Kentucky, Missouri, New Mexico and back to Kentucky.

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