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Projected Lottie Moon shortfall  
slows missions, raises questions By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
3/11/93

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Foreign Mission Board is projecting a 1.87 percent decrease, amounting to \$1.5 million, in giving to Southern Baptists' Lottie Moon Christmas Offering in 1992.

Projections released March 10 indicate Southern Baptists will have given \$79.84 million to the offering when the books close May 31. That's the third-largest Lottie Moon intake in history. Still, if projections prove correct, it will fall \$4.2 million below the \$84 million the board expected when it planned the 1993 budget last October.

"Obviously it means we won't advance," said Don R. Kammerdiener, the Foreign Mission Board's interim president.

The 1992 downturn marks the second time in three years receipts failed to reach the previous year's total. It comes as a new Southern Baptist mission program, part of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, reports financial growth. The CBF mission program got a jump start last year after two former Foreign Mission Board administrators, including the outgoing president, began working under CBF assignment.

Depending on how the Foreign Mission Board allocates funds, effects of the shortfall on existing missions work could be limited. Most affected will probably be capital needs such as new construction, equipment and mission vehicles. Trustees budgeted about \$7.6 million in capital for 1993.

"We are primarily a missionary-sending board," Kammerdiener said. "Some capital makes transportation and housing of our missionaries possible. It will be an interesting exercise to try to fit spending to the realities of the income."

Until it stalled during the past three years, Lottie Moon giving growth had shown a fairly steady increase, even during periods of economic instability. As it has grown, it has accounted for an increasing portion of support to Southern Baptists' foreign missionaries. But if projections prove correct, 1992 receipts will be less than both the 1991 and 1989 receipts.

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Although Kammerdiener acknowledged many churches increased their giving to the missions offering last year, he said recent research shows "we have a larger percentage of people in the churches who are committed to things other than missions . . . . I think we have to expect that to show up in offerings."

Another factor in the decline is the formation of a mission board under the CBF, Kammerdiener said. "The support that goes to that board will be support that at one time would have gone to the Foreign Mission Board, and we regret that," he said.

The CBF began promoting its own annual missions offering last fall, during the time Southern Baptists have traditionally promoted Lottie Moon. Shortly afterwards, former Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks agreed to lead the CBF's mission program. So far the CBF has collected \$1.1 million through its mission offering and plans to spend about \$5.9 million for missions in 1993. The CBF projects budget increases through 1994.

It's uncertain how much of that money would have gone into Southern Baptists' traditional foreign missions channels had the CBF not formed. Another question: Will the churches that support the Foreign Mission Board make up the loss?

The timing of CBF's promotion campaign and Parks' announcement disturbed many Southern Baptist leaders last year. But Parks, reached at his temporary office in Richmond, Va., said one reason he began work at the CBF was to recapture the missions interest of people who said they were going to quit giving to reach the world for Jesus Christ. "I hope we can be . . . a viable alternative," he said.

Parks believes the decrease did not result from a "one-year sudden difference because I left" but that it is part of a period of stagnation over the past several years. The Lottie Moon Offering collected \$78.8 million in 1988, \$80.2 million in 1989, \$79.4 million in 1990 and \$81.4 million in 1991.

He said the stalled giving to the Foreign Mission Board results from several years of leadership in the convention by people who have not shown a history of commitment to supporting foreign missions through the Foreign Mission Board.

"Frankly, I feel that given all that's happened in the convention, to have (only) a 2 percent decrease is really quite remarkable."

John Jackson, trustee chairman for the Foreign Mission Board, disagreed with Parks.

"I believe conservative churches have always supported missions and will continue to support missions," said the California pastor. Many have even increased their giving to Lottie Moon, Jackson added. Still, he said, Southern Baptist churches will need to "pick up the slack" from those now giving to the CBF. "I wish we all were moving in the same direction, but it's apparent we are not," he said.

Dellanna O'Brien, executive director for the Woman's Missionary Union, believes competition from CBF is only part of the picture.

"It's not just CBF. There are a number of ways the pie is divided," she said. She cited churches she knows that introduce their congregation to programs of non-Southern Baptist mission groups -- and actually encourage members to give them money. "That's been going on for the past several years," she said. "It's not just this year that we've had divided loyalties."

"I would not like to think of this (a downturn in receipts) as a long-term kind of affair," said O'Brien, whose missions education agency organized the first Lottie Moon offering 104 years ago. It recently has agreed to provide some educational support to CBF missions efforts, but that support does not include promoting CBF's missions offering.

"I think there's some loss of confidence on the part of many individuals and churches, but I would hope . . . we (Southern Baptists) will move quickly to the place where we can continue to support with confidence the working of the Foreign Mission Board," O'Brien said.

**Southern Baptist, other aid workers  
resume mercy missions in Somalia** By Craig Bird

MOGADISHU, Somalia (BP)--Southern Baptist relief efforts in Somalia have resumed after widespread fighting throughout the country shut down feeding stations.

Escalating violence has seen pitched battles in several Somali cities and increased sniper fire and grenade attacks on United States and United Nations troops.

The fighting forced one group of Southern Baptist volunteers to spend the day lying on the floor of their house, below the line of fire, and suspend aid efforts that were feeding 40,000 people a day.

Since then two volunteers have completed their two-month stint and left the country but another has come and two more will arrive soon. Southern Baptists don't have their own relief operation but work with other aid groups.

Currently seven Southern Baptist mission volunteers assist in feeding programs and medical clinics throughout the country.

Not all mission efforts focus on hunger relief. In the past few months, media missionary Zeb Moss has helped coordinate efforts in introducing the gospel to Somalis.

"We're taking a holistic approach to the work with Somalis," Moss said. "We're trying to take advantage of all the opportunities, while we intercede in the crisis."

To date, Somali outreach plans besides feeding include: 1) funding the reprinting of a small, compact Somali Bible; 2) funding the recording of the Bible on cassette tapes; 3) recording Christian radio programs on cassette tapes and distributing them in Somalia; 4) distributing hand-cranked cassette players; and 5) funding the printing of Somali hymn books.

Moss also works with other mission personnel to build a network of Christian groups who help Somalis. To support this ecumenical effort, Southern Baptist missionaries have designed an orientation program for people planning to work long-term in Somalia.

The mission personnel plan to stick to their effort despite the dangers.

"We're keenly aware of how neglected Somalia has been through the years," Moss said. "We're committed to make sure that doesn't happen again. Eventually the world's attention will move away from Somalia, but we plan to be here to help for a long time."

"Christians have prayed faithfully that God would place a hedge of protection around us and that hedge is holding," said one Southern Baptist whose short-term stint in Somalia recently ended.

Another Baptist volunteer reached the very edge of that hedge recently when a young Somali man walking in front of him raised his rifle after being ordered by U.S. Marines to drop the weapon.

He was shot dead.

As the American wept over the lost life, Somali passers-by questioned his tears.

"Why are you crying?" they asked, barely pausing to note the burst of gunfire and the crumpled, bleeding body. "It is just the will of Allah."

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Donald Martin contributed to this story.

**Southern Baptists denounce  
murder of abortion doctor** By Louis Moore

Baptist Press  
3/11/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists are reacting in horror to the shooting March 10 of abortion doctor David Gunn, 47, by alleged assailant Michael Frederick Griffin, a pro-life demonstrator.

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Police say Gunn was shot three times outside an abortion clinic he opened in Pensacola, Fla., in February. They say Griffin admitted to shooting Gunn. The incident occurred during a pro-life demonstration at the clinic.

In 1984, Pensacola was the site of Christmas Day bombings of an abortion clinic and two doctors' offices.

Gunn was a well-known figure in anti-abortion protests in southern Alabama and the panhandle of Florida where he worked in abortion clinics. The Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser reported he was frequently hounded by pro-life demonstrators to whom he responded with taunts of his own.

In January on the 20th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision upholding abortion rights, Gunn serenaded pro-life protesters by singing "Happy Birthday" to the 1973 decision and dancing to a tape of the Tom Petty song, "I Won't Back Down," the newspaper reported.

Griffin gave police a .38-caliber snub-nosed revolver. The Washington Post reported March 11 Griffin yelled "don't kill anymore babies" just before the shooting.

Griffin was participating in an anti-abortion protest organized by John Burt, a lay preacher at Whitfield Assembly of God Church in Pensacola, the Post reported. The New York Times said Burt is affiliated with Rescue America, a Houston-based anti-abortion group that organizes clinic blockades.

Richard D. Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said, "The Christian Life Commission has, and does, oppose and deplore the use of violence to protest abortion. We deeply regret the tragedy of the doctor shot and killed in Florida. To shoot and kill a human being in the name of saving human life is grotesque."

Land added, "However, we also grieve over the more than 4,000 unborn babies killed each day in abortion clinics across our land. The Christian Life Commission will continue to oppose and deplore acts of fatal violence against all human beings, born and unborn."

Said Glen H. Stassen, professor of Christian ethics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.: "This tragedy calls for all of us of whatever persuasion to pray for our adversaries' welfare and to pray for our own humility.

"Strong emotions drive both sides," Stassen said. "We all need to pray for methods of love and mutual respect, for prevention of the causes of abortion, for justice for mothers and their children and not for methods of hate and harassment. Any other course is the way of spiritual loss of soul and public loss of support."

The shooting has thrown the spotlight on the practice of demonstrating against and blockading abortion clinics. Even pro-life Southern Baptists are divided on that issue. Nearly two years ago when Operation Rescue blockaded abortion clinics in Wichita, Kan., three of the 36 Southern Baptist pastors in that city were arrested in demonstrations against abortion. One other pastor seriously considered joining in the protests. Five other SBC pastors were spotted standing on the sidelines at the demonstrations. The remaining SBC pastors in Wichita were divided along lives that were either for or against Operation Rescue.

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has taken a neutral position on the demonstrations and has published a pamphlet detailing both the pros and cons of the issue.

Bob Jewitt, a Southern Baptist who is media coordinator of Operation Rescue nationally, which is unrelated to Rescue America, said Operation Rescue has had more than 72,000 arrests since 1988 and "has not had one incident of violence."

"We've always taken a position of nonviolence in everything we do," he said. "Our organization does not encourage or condone violence. We don't think killing solves anything. We stand for the protection of life, and we don't just stop at unborn babies."

Jewitt described the shooting as an isolated incident by a man who was acting on his own. "We cannot monitor everyone" who takes part in pro-life demonstrations, he said.

"I don't know anybody in the movement who wouldn't have given his life so that (Gunn) might live," Jewitt said.

Jewitt said he fears the incident will increase support for congressional passage of the Freedom of Choice Act and the Freedom of Access to Reproductive Services Act.

"The impact is traumatic," Jewitt said. "Now we've got a situation where (supporters of the bills) have some fuel for this battle, and they're going to use it. They're going to use this for the emotional value."

National Right to Life Committee President Wanda Franz said her organization "condemns the violence" against Gunn.

"NRLC is involved in peaceful, legal activities to protest human lives threatened by abortion, infanticide and euthanasia," she said.

"NRLC continues to oppose any form of violence to fight the violence of abortion. National Right to Life works in education, legislation and political action to ensure the right to life for unborn children, people with disabilities and other people."

The Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights issued a statement, noting, "We deplore the intimidation, harassment, stalking, terrorism -- and now murder -- that has surrounded women who choose abortion and the medical professionals who serve them. The religious intolerance expressed by antiabortion protesters at clinics throughout the country has inevitably bred this violence, and it must stop."

The group called for a "moment of silence in the memory of Dr. Gunn and in support of all women and physicians who are doing what they believe is right, often against great odds."

Kate Michelman, president of the National Abortion Rights Action League, in a statement, noted, "For too long this nation has stood silent in the face of the blockades, the bombings, the arson, the chemical attacks. It is imperative that pro-choice Americans call on their elected representatives to unequivocally denounce not only the tragedy that occurred but the anti-choice terrorism that is growing throughout America."

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Tom Strode, Art Toalston and Pat Cole contributed to this report.

#### FIRST-PERSON COMMENTARY

Pro-life Baptist: tragedy  
abounds in doctor's murder

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press  
3/11/93

The March 10 killing of physician David Gunn is an enormous tragedy for at least three reasons.

First, it is a tragedy for Gunn, his family and those close to him. Shot down in his prime, he leaves a grieving wife and two children, ages 10 and 12.

Second, it is a tragedy for Michael Griffin, 31, who in a single moment of anger or insanity extinguished a precious human life (the very thing he claimed to be protecting), hurt countless others and ruined his own.

Third and most far-reaching, it is a tragedy for the pro-life movement -- a heavy blow in a quick succession of recent serious setbacks. Gunn's death will be used as a brush to paint the entire pro-life movement as a gang of violent crazies, and probably as a club to beat it down with new legal action against peaceful pro-life activity.

The tragedy could not have come at a worse time for responsible and nonviolent pro-lifers -- particularly Christian pro-lifers -- of which I am one.

Griffin reportedly is associated with a Christian church; the abortion clinic protest at which he killed Gunn reportedly was led by a lay preacher. A society increasingly hostile to Christians who oppose unrestricted abortion will view Griffin's murderous act as another confirmation that anti-abortion activity in all its forms must be crushed.

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Meanwhile, a conservative Supreme Court apparently has concluded -- regardless of some justices' qualms about the constitutionality of Roe v. Wade -- that overturning the 1973 ruling that legalized abortion would cause social upheaval. An earlier Supreme Court made a similar decision about legal slavery, but Washington isn't much given to historical reflection these days.

A new president is in office who is no friend of unborn children. He marked the 20th anniversary of Roe v. Wade by eliminating, with the stroke of a pen, most of the modest pro-life measures of the previous two administrations. He also has pledged to support the pro-abortion movement in passing the Freedom of Choice Act, which goes far beyond Roe v. Wade in guaranteeing legal abortion for virtually any reason at any time of pregnancy.

A new state-by-state assault is being mounted against any abortion restrictions at all -- from 24-hour waiting periods to parental notification of minors' abortions -- despite overwhelming public support for reasonable restrictions. And after being attacked for years as unconcerned about pregnant women in crisis, pro-life workers who operate crisis pregnancy centers to help those very women now face various campaigns to close down their centers.

Pro-lifers understandably are weary, discouraged, even angry. But it will be fatal to their cause -- as fatal as giving up -- if they turn to violence or fail to condemn what Michael Griffin has done and make every effort to ensure it never happens again.

Compounding the Gunn tragedy was the reported reaction of the group that sponsored the protest at which the physician was killed. Don Treshman, national director of Rescue America (not affiliated with Operation Rescue), issued a statement saying, "While we think Gunn's death is unfortunate, the fact is that a number of mothers would have been put at risk today and over a dozen babies would have died at his hands. Pro-lifers are asked to pray that he had a chance to ask for God's forgiveness for his part in the abortion holocaust before his demise."

This statement is pathetically inadequate, doctrinaire and irresponsible. It sounds like one of those "apologies" from a fanatic terrorist group for the unintended death of a bystander. Pro-abortion forces will have a field day with it.

Responsible pro-life groups, Christian and secular, should condemn and are condemning this terrible act in the clearest possible terms. They also should examine their ranks and expel anyone, anywhere, who considers violence a means of stopping abortion. Gunn's death reportedly is the first fatality associated with abortion protest, but it isn't the first act of violence.

There is a place for legal action to protect unborn life. There is a place, in my opinion, for nonviolent civil disobedience -- just as there was during the civil rights movement. But there is no place for violence in any form.

Violence is what we are trying to stop. Life is what we are trying to cherish and protect. Look to Martin Luther King Jr. Look to Mother Teresa. Look to Christ. The war against abortion is indeed a war, but it should be fought with love, mercy, acts of compassion and appeals to conscience -- not hatred or force.

It's the other side that sees violence against innocent life as a way to solve social problems.

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Bridges, news editor at Baptist Press' foreign bureau in Richmond, Va., has been active in the pro-life movement for more than a decade.

Adrian Rogers is critical  
of persons speaking for him By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press  
3/11/93

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Adrian Rogers, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, deplored Foreign Mission Board staff speaking on his behalf in an Associated Baptist Press Mar. 2 story.

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Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in suburban Memphis, Tenn., said he was asked if the group, attending a meeting nearby, could come by the church Feb. 18 for a visit.

"It was a private conversation among friends," Rogers said.

Rogers said the "voodoo quotations" -- other people quoting what he said -- were unethical, and the least they could have done was to call him to ask permission to quote him.

However, Rogers told Baptist Press, the "conversation with friends" did include an affirmation of Woman's Missionary Union, dismay at the new approach by the national WMU to broaden its work beyond SBC entities and his conviction that if WMU no longer wants to be an auxiliary to the SBC but operate like a parachurch organization, it should no longer have a representative on the SBC Executive Committee or the Inter-Agency Council.

"I want to affirm what the WMU has done" in its 105-year relationship with the SBC, Rogers said, "in helping raise funds for the missionaries and for promoting mission education."

Rogers said men in the SBC were wrong in 1888 to exclude women, which led to the WMU organizing as an auxiliary. It is not that women have been wrong in leading out in missions in Baptist churches, Rogers said, but that men have not taken an interest in missions like they should.

"We need to put male leadership back where it belongs," Rogers said, in supporting, promoting and leading out in missions. When men take their rightful place in supporting missions then women and children also will be involved, he said.

"Look at the SBC annual meeting time -- when the pastors are in one place having a meeting and the WMU is at another having its meeting," Rogers said in explaining how the two groups are apart. "It's a shame."

On the other hand, Rogers said he is dismayed at the "new tack, the new approach" voted by the national WMU in January. He said he would rather have the WMU continue to fully support Southern Baptist missions causes.

"If they (the WMU) are no longer going to be an auxiliary to the SBC, and the SBC has no control over them like other SBC entities, then they have become a parachurch organization," Rogers said.

If they have the "freedom" of a parachurch organization then they should not have a representative on the SBC Executive Committee, Rogers said. No other SBC agency or any other entity has a representative on the Executive Committee.

"I want absolutely no control over the WMU," Rogers said. They are free to do whatever they want, he said, but correspondingly the Southern Baptist Convention should have complete control over its mission programs to decide what it wants to do in supporting and promoting them.

Regarding the SBC Brotherhood Commission, Rogers said his comments were slanted in the ABP article because he told the group he felt Brotherhood had been unsuccessful in getting most men involved in missions in the local church. The ABP article implied Rogers said the missions promotion should be led by the pastors and Brotherhood and not the WMU.

The group met in Rogers' church office and included FMB personnel who were attending a world mission emphasis Feb. 15-19 at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis. Listed as attending the meeting were three FMB vice presidents -- Sam James, Harlan Spurgeon and Bill Wakefield -- and staff members David Cornelius, Irma Duke, Don Reavis, Herman Russell and Kenn Shirley.

Reavis and Duke were quoted in the ABP story talking about what Rogers said but other information in the story was attributed to "participants." ABP writer Robert Dilday, associate editor of the Religious Herald, journal of Virginia Baptists, noted "attempts to contact Rogers for comment were unsuccessful."

**Ethnic church-start leader  
calls for greater inclusion**

By David Winfrey

DETROIT (BP)--Failure to include ethnic and African-American leadership in Southern Baptist work could result in language groups forming their own agencies, said the Home Mission Board's director of language church extension.

"The concept of shared leadership must be seriously considered and implemented," said Oscar Romo, speaking to the annual conference of ethnic and black church starting leaders.

"The resistance to the inclusion of ethnic and black leaders may encourage the emergence of entities either within the framework of the denomination or as separate entities," he said. "These groups don't need us, we need them."

Citing statistics from 1991-92, Romo compared the growth of the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole with the growth of language churches for the following categories:

Congregations -- SBC, 0.6 percent; language, 12.8 percent.

Baptisms -- SBC, -7.3 percent; language, 33.6 percent.

Receipts -- SBC, 4.1 percent; language, 34.7 percent.

"It is common knowledge that were it not for the ethnic (churches) the SBC would decline," Romo said. (The number of constituted anglo churches increased by 79 during 1992, according to Uniform Church Letter results.)

"You know yourselves that if it were not for the CP (Cooperative Program) giving of the ethnic churches, you would not even be able to have the money you have much less meet the budget," he said.

Southern Baptists have more than 6,000 ethnic churches and missions worshipping in 100 languages, Romo said.

Worship and study materials need to be formulated in each language and cultural context in order to effectively present the gospel, Romo said.

"We are dealing with people who can best be evangelized in their own context, and the only two things that we have to weave this is the language and the culture," he said. "We must learn how to market the gospel to this crowd."

Saying Southern Baptists must decide between evangelizing America or saving their budgets, Romo criticized attitudes that prevent church-starting efforts in areas where they cannot become self-supporting.

"We must get out of the old idea that they have to pay back to us within five years what we put into it or else they are not worth it," he said. "What we're saying is we will buy souls if they will pay us back."

Southern Baptists must recognize America's growing ethnicity to effectively present the gospel, he said.

"The myth has been discovered that our nation is not a melting pot, but a mosaic of people representing hundreds of ethnic groups," he said. "America is now the greatest and most responsive mission field in the world. It will soon be too secularized to care about its spiritual condition."

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**Pornography, sexual sins  
termed pervasive in society**

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press  
3/11/93

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)--An advocate for the eradication of pornography urged Christian women to "wake up" to the overwhelming presence of sexual sins in the world.

"Pornography and sexual sins are pervasive in our world," said Liz Minnick of Austin, Texas, and a member of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's board of commissioners.

"God could have created Adam and Steve, but he didn't. He created Adam and Eve," Minnick said in illustrating how pornography often depicts homosexual acts.

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Minnick aggressively called women to arms against pornography as she addressed more than 800 women attending the first National Christian Women's Enrichment Conference in San Antonio, Texas, March 5-7.

Illustrating the presence of pornography throughout the nation, Minnick said more outlets for hard-core pornography exist in this country than do McDonalds' restaurants.

"Pornography is an \$8-10 billion a year profit-making business, much of it operated through organized crime," she said. "Every 46 seconds a woman is raped, and 86 percent of convicted rapists were regular users of pornography."

Minnick said the "typical child molester" abuses an average of 380 children in his lifetime "and he usually uses pornography to aid in this crime."

Only 5 percent of pornography depicts heterosexual acts, Minnick said. The other 95 percent of pornographic illustrations include acts of homosexuality, sadomasochism, sexual acts with children and animals "to name a few," she said.

The top consumer group of pornography is adolescent boys, ages 12-17, she added.

Minnick said Christians should take a stand against pornography for several reasons.

"For one thing, God's Word says it's wrong," she said. "The word fornication found in the Bible has the same root word as pornography."

She said Christians should oppose pornography because it leads to rape and sexual violence and even death. Because pornography can lead to sexual immorality, it can also lead to contracting deadly venereal diseases, she said.

"Sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise like we've never seen before," Minnick said. "In 1962, there were two known sexual diseases (syphilis and gonorrhea); today there are 25, and one of those is AIDS."

Minnick, who said Americans are "one generation away from losing our value system and Christian heritage," said pornography can be battled through prayer, education, boycotts of video stores that carry it and advertisers who promote it and by joining an active coalition that fights it.

Minnick urged women who want to join the fight against pornography to call the Christian Life Commission office in Nashville at (615) 244-2495 or the National Coalition Against Pornography office in Cincinnati at (513) 521-6227.

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

Conquering negative emotions  
requires action, trust in God      By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press  
3/11/93

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)--Rising above negative emotions and reaching maturity requires acting on that which can be controlled and trusting God to take care of the rest, two Southern Baptist counselors said.

Dorothy Sample, a counselor and consultant from Flint, Mich., and Rebekah Land, counselor and coordinator of the Trilogy Program at Parthenon Pavilion in Nashville, led conferences on depression and negative emotions during the first National Christian Women's Enrichment Conference March 5-7 in San Antonio, Texas.

A woman whose faith is anchored in God can come at the challenges of life with confidence, "but it's not easy," said Sample, former national president of Woman's Missionary Union.

"We have to learn to do the part that is ours and not try to control the part that is God's. I think we grieve the Holy Spirit of God when we don't use the resources he gives us to take control of our lives. The more we know God, the more we understand ourselves and life," she said.

When dealing with depression, Land urged women not to try to solve the whole problem at once.

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"Narrow your focus and find some place to start," she said. "It may be a small place. Focus only on the things that are in your control. The good news is God only holds you accountable for your part."

For example, Land said depressed Christians often find praying difficult. Instead of not praying, "the better thing to do is tell God you don't feel like talking to him, but that you're open to letting him work with you. Not working on the things you can control will lead to depression."

Sample listed three groups of negative emotions that create problems for Christians:

1) anxiety, worry and fear -- emotions often caused by a person's inability to control something.

2) depression, loneliness, guilt and grief -- dark emotions that require turning the focus from oneself to others.

3) anger, resentment and bitterness.

Land said depression is no respecter of persons -- age, sex, educational level, Christians and non-Christians. Depression most often starts in the late 20s. While everyone experiences some types of short-term depression, more serious types require treatment.

Symptoms of depression, Land said, include sad mood, loss of interest in life, change in appetite, change in sleep patterns, fatigue, change in perspective, feelings of worthlessness, diminished ability to think and concentrate and thoughts of suicide.

One of the difficult things about depression is that it feeds on itself. With Christians, they begin to feel guilty for being depressed," Land said. Consequently, they get more depressed.

"Is depression a sin?" Land asked. "No. Can sinful behavior lead to depression? Yes. These are not the same things."

Abuse -- physical, sexual, emotional -- often brings on depression, Land said.

"God didn't make us to absorb abuse," she said. "He made us to nurture and love and care for others. When abuse happens, it damages us. That can lead to depression and it does."

Land and Sample agreed that the unwillingness or inability to forgive others can lead to negative emotions, including depression.

"If someone has hurt us, everything in us wants not to forgive them," Land said. "Forgiveness is not choosing to nurture my anger so I can get on with my own life. Forgiving someone and saying what they did is OK are not the same thing."

Sample listed five steps to forgiving others:

-- Accept the accountability principle that every person is accountable to God.

-- Own your own sin in the relationship.

-- Try to understand the other person's perspective and look for good in the person.

-- Choose to accept what you cannot change.

-- Choose to relate to the person as if the sin had never occurred.

About 800 women attended the three-day conference co-developed by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and Woman's Missionary Union.

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

Author offers 8 principles  
for reaching 'secular people' By David Winfrey

Baptist Press  
3/11/93

DETROIT (BP)--Christians must communicate the gospel simply, repeatedly and in the cultural context for whom it is intended, a Methodist professor and author told Southern Baptist church-starting leaders recently.

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"All churches that are reaching secular people in significant numbers are flexing to meet them culturally," said George Hunter III, dean of the Stanley Jones School of Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminar in Kentucky.

Secular people, those with no church background, often are turned off by a traditional worship service because it resembles the style of TV evangelism that "passes itself off as Christianity," Hunter said.

"Churches employing traditional forms (of worship) almost never reach secular people in significant numbers," he said during a conference sponsored by the Home Mission Board's new church extension division.

Hunter, author of "How to Reach Secular People," said the church has lost a lot of its cultural influence. "For a long time, the church has been like a football team. We always had a home-field advantage. We wrote the rules. We briefed the referees."

During that time, the church simply had to harvest the population that had experienced Christianity through its culture. Now, Hunter contends, the church must start from ground zero with people who are not "church broken."

Quoting Gallup polls, Hunter said the U.S. population with no religious training increased from 9 percent in 1968 to 25 percent in 1988.

He estimates 120 million Americans are secular people, "making North America or the U.S.A. the largest mission field in the Western Hemisphere."

Hunter said Christians should understand eight principles for communicating Christianity to secular people.

1. Almost all effective evangelization begins where people are and not where we want them to be.

2. It involves the ministry of explanation.

3. The gospel must be communicated through the vernacular.

While seminaries prepare students to read Greek and handle administrative duties, they do little to prepare them for reaching secular people, he said.

"The task we leave undone is to prepare all seminary graduates to spend the rest of their lives being cross-cultural communicators."

4. The miracle of dialogue. Christians must be willing to honestly discuss the doubts and hangups of people with no spiritual background, he said.

Christians don't have to be able to answer all questions to find a receptive person, he added.

5. Cumulative effect. "No one gets the message the first time."

6. The principle of creative redundancy. Because no one gets it the first time, Christians should learn to say the same things several ways, he said.

7. For most secular people, their assimilation to the church fellowship often precedes their commitment to Jesus Christ.

8. "The Christian faith is more caught than taught." Christians lose credibility with secular people for one of three reasons related to how they live out their faith, he said.

One reason is secular people perceive Christians really don't believe what they say they believe. Another reason is secular people think Christians believe what they say, but they don't show it with their lives.

The third reason, he said, is secular people think Christians believe what they say and live by it, but secular people don't perceive that it makes much difference.

The laity are vital to reaching secular people, he said, because ordained ministers are perceived as being paid to dispense their message.

Deacon's cake delivery  
becomes mission of mercy

By Marv Knox

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Dennis Jones baked a cake for Philip Herd, and his timely delivery may have saved a friend's life.

Jones got to thinking about Herd during a deacons' meeting at Ninth & O Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., when chairman Everett Miller urged fellow deacons to go visit the church's homebound members.

After the meeting, Jones glanced at a stack of cards with information about the homebound, and "two names just jumped out," including Herd's.

"Mr. Herd used to play dart ball with me," recalled Jones. "He had a stroke about a year ago that left him partially paralyzed, unable to speak well and unable to come to church.

"His wife, Goldie, has been taking care of him, but her health has been failing, too."

Jones, a carpenter, had been home the past several months recuperating from a work-related injury. He decided a fresh cake would cheer the couple and add a nice touch to his visit.

"I nearly didn't bake that cake," he said. "I thought of several reasons why I could put it off, but the Lord just pushed me along."

So he had the cake ready when his wife, Carolyn, a secretary at Ninth & O, got home from work on a Tuesday afternoon.

"When I knocked on the (Herd's) door, nobody answered," he reported. "I knocked on the door and rang the doorbell, and we almost walked away, but something kept me there.

"But Mr. Herd finally opened the door, and he was crying so hard he could hardly talk. He said his wife had been dead since Sunday afternoon. I touched her arm, and it was cold and hard."

Herd had known something was wrong, but due to the effects of his stroke, he had been incapacitated, Jones said. "I asked why he didn't call; he said he didn't know what to do. I guess the Lord just kind of protected him. He told me he had been trying to wake her up and finally decided she was dead."

Finding themselves in the midst of the crisis, the Joneses got to work. He called a local mortuary and then made sure Herd got a meal; she began tracking down other members of the Herd family.

They stayed with Herd to meet with the mortuary staff and coroner and kept him company until a cousin arrived to sit with him overnight. The next day, Jones made sure Herd had plenty of cooked food on hand and sought to comfort the grieving widower.

Later, he reflected on how God had guided him through the ordeal.

"Most of the next day, I just felt like the Lord directed me there," he said. "You could say it was an accident that I picked up his card, but I wouldn't. I laid it down at first because I hadn't been to see him in awhile and was ashamed. But I was humbled the Lord would use me to find someone else."

Ninth & O pastor Rodney Burnette noted Jones filled an important role enacted by deacons in the life of a church.

"With an aging congregation, the role of the deacons to help hold the hands of the pastor and minister to the body is immensely important," Burnette said.

"Dennis set for us a tremendous example as he took upon himself the role of a ministering servant to care for the homebound."

For his part, Jones said the lesson he learned applies to other healthy church members. "Our shut-ins need to be visited more," he insisted. "When you visit a nursing home, you see so many people who have been forgotten. You see people nobody comes to see.

"When you've got an urge to visit someone, you better do it."

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