

(BP)

-- BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355
Herb Hollinger, Vice President
Fax (615) 742-8919
CompuServe ID# 70420.17

BUREAUS

ATLANTA 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232
NASHVILLE 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va., 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223

April 26, 1993

93-68

GEORGIA -- Southern's McSwain to head Shorter College in Georgia.
KENTUCKY -- Wrapup: Conference speakers urge churches to help children.
KENTUCKY -- Churches called to address needs of children, teens.
KENTUCKY -- Adults need to intervene to curb teen problems.
KENTUCKY -- Church ministries should include sex education.
KENTUCKY -- Jesus's message about children was revolutionary, prof says.
NORTH CAROLINA -- CLC's executive director targets 'social gospel.'
PHILIPPINES -- Fire guts part of Philippine Baptist seminary in Davao.

**Southern's McSwain to head
Shorter College in Georgia**

**Baptist Press
4/26/93**

ROME, Ga. (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's provost, Larry L. McSwain, has been elected as the 16th president of Shorter College.

McSwain, 52, has been a faculty member of the Louisville, Ky., seminary since 1970. In addition to provost, he is professor of church and community at Southern and previously has been dean of the seminary's school of theology and director of master of divinity studies.

McSwain received unanimous approval of Shorter's 21-member presidential search committee April 17 and the full trustee board April 23. Founded in 1873, the college has an undergraduate enrollment of some 870 students.

Southern's president, Roy L. Honeycutt, who will retire July 31, said after McSwain's election: "Dr. McSwain is eminently well qualified to serve as president of Shorter College. He has served Southern Seminary with distinction and honor and has brought stellar gifts to his role as an academic leader. His departure will be a substantial loss to the seminary, and I deeply regret that. I also regret the loss of an individual who is a personal friend as well as a professional colleague."

R. Albert Mohler Jr., Southern's president-elect who will assume office Aug. 1, said, "I congratulate Dr. McSwain upon his election as president of Shorter College. I have long respected his administrative ability and analytic skills. I wish him well."

Since Mohler's election, two deans also have announced career changes: Milburn Price, dean of the school of church music, who will become dean of the school of music at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., and William B. Rogers, dean of the school of Christian education, who will step down as dean July 31 but remain on the faculty.

"This is a period of administrative restructuring and transition for Southern Seminary," Mohler told Baptist Press in a telephone interview April 26. "These openings have provided a unique opportunity for a comprehensive structural review of the executive staff, which I intend to undertake beginning May 1. By Aug. 1, when I assume office, I will formally present the results of that organizational review and make appropriate announcements concerning new leadership to fulfill these responsibilities."

--more--

The provost and dean positions at Southern traditionally have been filled by presidential appointment in consultation with the seminary's trustees.

--30--

WRAPUP

Conference speakers urge
churches to help children

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press
4/26/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Christians should be at the forefront of efforts to improve the lives of children in America, speakers at a Southern Baptist conference on "Children and the Church" emphasized.

"The church must be the moral locomotive and not the caboose," Children's Defense Fund President Marian Wright Edelman told more than 550 registrants at the conference. She was one of the keynote speakers at the April 21-23 event directed by the Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary with co-sponsorship by seven other Baptist entities.

Edelman declared the church must assume its role as "the key torchbearer of change."

"We must be a part of a new spiritual struggle which must arise across our land to stop the killing and neglect of children and put our action and our leadership and our pocketbooks behind our purported family values," she said.

While Americans are rightly obsessed with helping starving children in Somalia, Edelman said they have been blind to worse conditions in their own country. "Why are there more poor children in rich America than there are residents in famine-stricken Somalia?" she asked.

Edelman said America has 14.3 poor children, a higher number than any time in history. Further, an estimated 5 million American children are going hungry, she added. "Thousands of children -- one every 53 seconds -- die of poverty in rich America and millions more suffer preventable sickness and chronic disease."

In addition to eliminating poverty, efforts are needed to give children a nation with less gun-related violence, more wholesome television programming and better role models in the media and home, Edelman said.

The detrimental effects of television on children were cited in an address by Hedda Sharapan, associate producer of the popular children's program "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood." While noting Fred Rogers uses television to remind children they are special, she said children are better off playing than watching television. Rogers, she said, shares the opinion too much TV can be harmful for children.

When children watch television, Sharapan suggested adults watch to get "a window to their (children's) world."

Children are exposed to extreme violence on television, said Sharapan, citing one report that said 77 percent of broadcast programs contain a violent act or the threat of hurting or killing someone. Television violence, she said, is often called "happy violence" because results of the behavior are not portrayed.

Greed and commercialism also are taught to children on television, Sharapan said. "The business of commercial television is not to produce a program for an audience but to produce an audience for a sponsor to sell a program."

In an address on the problems of today's teens, G. Wade Rowatt, Lawrence and Charlotte Hoover professor of pastoral care at Southern Seminary, predicted problems among today's teens will only get worse unless adults intervene.

"If you think the 1960s were turbulent, wait until the next five years," said Rowatt. "If we don't respond, the riots of the '60s will look like skirmishes."

Citing issues such as murder, drug abuse and AIDS, Rowatt said more teens are in trouble than in years past and they are involved in problems at an earlier age. He blamed teen-agers' problems on adults, however. "Teen-agers are just trying to grow up and meet legitimate needs without adequate resources," he said.

--more--

Another speaker, James Fowler, professor of theology and human development at Emory University in Atlanta, urged Christians to join a "partnership with God" to improve the lives of children.

Societal and personal problems cannot be solved apart from God's action, Fowler said. "In short, we know there is no redemption and liberation from the personal and social bondage to which children of violence are often subject, apart from the presence of commitments of persons and groups who have aligned themselves -- sacrificially and wholeheartedly -- in partnership with God's liberating and redeeming action."

Fowler warned a failure to act could have severe consequences. "Nations that allow corruption to permeate their economies and harden their hearts toward the suffering of the poor are like those cities whom the prophet charged with selling the needy for a pair of shoes," Fowler said. "The judgment and destruction of a God that intends justice on such a society is still certain and sure."

The conference's final speaker, Diana Garland, director of Southern's Gheens Center, said Jesus preached a "revolutionary" message about children that today's society should heed.

By placing children first, Jesus turned the "world's values upside down," she said. "In a nation where more children live in poverty than any other age group, where parents staying together for the sake of the children is considered out of vogue, perhaps even socially incorrect, (Jesus's message) is clearly still revolutionary," said Garland, dean-elect of Southern's Carver School of Church Social Work.

Yet the Christian vision for addressing child poverty and neglect and other social problems should not come from a simple response to the needs of the world, Garland said. "Ultimately, we answer to God for living in response to God's commandments, not to the world in response to its needs."

--30--

Mark Wingfield and Sarah Zimmerman contributed to this report.

Churches called to address
needs of children, teens

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
4/26/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--If children are the future, churches have a responsibility to keep the future bright, workshop leaders said during a Children and the Church conference.

The conference was sponsored by the Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and co-sponsored by seven other Baptist entities.

Taking care of children begins with parents who are priests to their children, said Harold Hime, associate director of church and community ministries for the Home Mission Board.

Children's programs are not a solution to family problems, Hime said. Instead, parents need to be taught to lead home Bible studies and worship with their children.

Churches also can begin teaching children biblical marriage is based on commitment, not love, Hime said. Waiting until a couple is engaged to teach about marriage is not effective, he added.

Home is also the best place to teach sex education, and churches can equip parents for that responsibility, said Karl Babb, family enrichment specialist for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

"Human sexuality is good in its creation and wholesome in its divine intent but is often distorted and degraded," Babb said. Christians must teach sexuality is to be enjoyed in the bounds of marriage, he said.

--more--

The Sunday School Board has developed a Christian Sex Education curriculum to help parents teach children. The material is designed for ages from younger children through adolescents. It includes a guide for church leaders to introduce parents to the books.

Churches must present values-based sex education, said Jan Turrentine, editor of Accent, a Woman's Missionary Union magazine for teens. She called for churches and parents to recognize teens as sexual beings and talk frankly with them about sexual behavior.

Churches can help teens see decisions about sex and their bodies are ultimately spiritual decisions, Turrentine said. Churches can also facilitate forums in which parents and children can communicate.

Other issues children deal with include homelessness, loss of their parents' jobs and blows to their self-esteem. Barbara Massey, editor of "Aware" and "Discover" magazines for Woman's Missionary Union, said it is naive to think childhood is the "golden age of innocence."

Children experience emotional pain but they do not communicate it like adults, Massey said. Children process their thoughts and emotions while they play, while adults assume children would not be playing if they were sad.

To help children in crisis, Massey said to give children all available information. Children know when they are not given the whole story, she said. Adults should help children clarify the information and ask children about the event several days later to be sure they understand its meaning, Massey said.

Children, Massey emphasized, need someone to listen attentively to them and accept their feelings rather than telling them, "Don't be afraid" or "Don't cry."

"They basically need what you need, just in a different way," Massey said.

Parents who divorce also present a crisis for children. The most difficult problem for children when parents divorce is conflict between parents, said Paul Sorrels, professor at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas.

Sorrels uses a six-week program to help children accept the divorce as final, resolve anger and self-blame, adjust to losses, disengage from conflicts, realize divorce is a parental decision and find hope for future relationships.

Christians also can help children by being political activists, said Shanon Daley, director of religious affairs for the Children's Defense Fund. Writing letters, offering prayers and visiting members of Congress are ways to lobby on issues affecting children.

Daley urged Christians to keep informed on key pieces of legislation, such as the Family Preservation Bill and funding for Headstart.

--30--

Mark Wingfield and Pat Cole contributed to this report.

Adults need to intervene
to curb teen problems

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
4/26/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Without adult intervention, problems among American teens will only get worse, predicted a Southern Baptist pastoral care professor.

"If you think the 1960's were turbulent, wait until the next five years," said Wade Rowatt, Lawrence and Charlotte Hoover professor of pastoral care at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. "If we don't respond, the riots of the '60s will look like skirmishes." Rowatt addressed a conference on "Children and the Church" sponsored by the seminary's Ghens Center for Christian Family Ministry and co-sponsored by seven other Baptist entities.

Today's teens are in a "new level of difficulty," said Rowatt, who recently studied youth crises during a nine-month sabbatical. Citing issues such as murder, drug abuse and AIDS, Rowatt said more teen-agers are in trouble than in years past and they are involved in problems at an earlier age.

--more--

He blames teens' problems on adults, however. "Teen-agers are just trying to grow up and meet legitimate needs without adequate resources," he said.

Some ways adults can help include:

-- Value each ethnic group. "Teen-agers need a place where their heritage is worth something, a place where they are loved for who they are. They need a message of equality and that their uniqueness is acceptable."

-- Create meaningful places of service. Teens are under-challenged, Rowatt said. Churches used to give teens jobs such as playing the piano, taking up the offering or working in the nursery. Now most churches pamper teen-agers without giving them any real responsibility, Rowatt said.

-- Educate parents through shared resources of schools, governments and churches. Such groups need to work together as a society, not in isolation, he said.

-- Produce programs with an attractive package. "We need MTV quality with a moral message," Rowatt said. A poor medium will keep the message from being heard, he said.

-- Share programs. Something that works should be franchised to the nation, he said.

-- Listen, listen, listen. "Don't talk down to teen-agers or make decisions for them or push them aside."

-- Spend time with teens. "Adolescents need as much of their parents' time as 2-year-olds," he said.

--30--

Church ministries should
include sex education

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press
4/26/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Sex education and teen pregnancy prevention programs should be "at the core of a church's youth and family ministries," emphasized the editor of a national magazine for teen-agers.

Jan Turrentine, editor of "Accent," a publication of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, said such programs must "be rooted in our theology and faith and in our life together as people of God." She spoke to a workshop on teen pregnancy prevention at an April 21-23 "Children and the Church" conference in Louisville, Ky. The conference was directed by the Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and co-sponsored by seven other Baptist entities.

Churches are charged with presenting values-based sex education in a nation where seven of 10 teens have had sex by age 18 and a million teen-age girls become pregnant each year, Turrentine said.

These problems, she said, are aggravated by sexual values depicted in movies and on TV which often stress it "is more glamorous and romantic not to plan for sex but to be 'swept away' instead." Parents contribute to their teen-agers' irresponsible sexual conduct because parents often "feel perplexed and even threatened" to talk with teens about sex, Turrentine said.

"Many parents and church leaders put blinders on when it comes to seeing teen-agers as sexual beings. No wonder so many parents are stunned and paralyzed when their unmarried teen-aged daughter announces she is pregnant or their son tells them his girlfriend is pregnant."

Turrentine noted teen-age girls who have low self esteem, poor grades in school and a sense of hopelessness for the future are more likely to experience an unplanned pregnancy.

She offered seven suggestions for congregations to follow to help prevent teen pregnancy and promote responsible sexual behavior among teens:

-- Offer programs that foster hope, encouragement, self-esteem and relationships with caring adults.

-- Provide tutoring and educational support.

--more--

- Offer programs that teach not only sexuality information but values related to sex.
- Help children and youth develop decision-making skills.
- Facilitate forums in which parents and children can communicate.
- Guide teen-agers to see decisions about sex and their bodies are ultimately spiritual decisions.
- Convey the message of God's love and grace.

--30--

Jesus's message about children
was revolutionary, prof says

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press
4/26/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Jesus preached a "revolutionary" message about children today's society should heed, according to a Southern Baptist social work professor.

Diana Richmond Garland, a church social work professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., said Jesus "turned the world's values upside down and placed children first." Garland addressed an April 21-23 conference on "Children and the Church" directed by the Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry at the seminary and co-sponsored by seven other Baptist entities.

"In a nation where more children live in poverty than any other age group, where parents staying together for the sake of the children is considered out of vogue, perhaps even socially incorrect, (Jesus's message) is clearly still revolutionary," said Garland, director of the seminary's Gheens Center and dean-elect of the school's Carver School of Church Social Work.

"Jesus is saying children are supposed to come first," Garland stressed. Therefore, churches are called to work for justice for children, she said. "As the church, we need to be working to loose the chains of poverty that create discouragement and despair. We need to untie the bonds of commercialization that distorts children's values. We need to set children free to become all that the Good Father has created for them to be."

Children, she added, can be most effectively helped by aiding their families for "family is the ecology of the child."

However, Garland said Southern Baptists seem more concerned with theological conformity than performing needed ministries. "As a Southern Baptist, I cannot believe God endorses our denomination's preoccupation with internal theological squabbles, like modern-day Pharisees and Sadducees," she said. Jesus, she added, "commanded us not to agree on theology but to love God and neighbor."

The Christian vision for addressing social problems should not come from a simple response to the needs of the world, Garland emphasized. "Ultimately, we answer to God for living in response to God's commandments, not to the world in response to its needs."

Church programs that address social needs should nurture spiritual growth for Christians, she said. "Involving the saints in active ministry to social needs should lead to spiritual discipline and growth just as surely as involving them in the disciplines of Bible study and prayer. And that discipline may include volunteer services or writing letters to congressional representatives."

Despite squabbles in denominations and churches, Garland challenged the church leaders to "stay in the boat" and continue working for the betterment of children. "Few professionals working in churches and church agencies have not been tempted to 'jump ship,'" she said. God's calling, however, is sufficient reason to stay with the task, she said.

--30--

CLC's executive director
targets 'social gospel'

By Norman Miller

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--"The idea of a social gospel was hatched in hell," Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission Director Richard Land told students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"There is only one gospel," he said, "a whole gospel for whole people that brings society under the sway of Jesus's principles and righteousness."

Land made his comments in classes and a chapel sermon during a visit to Southeastern's campus in Wake Forest, N.C.

Preaching from the chapter 5 of the New Testament Book of Matthew, Land said Jesus saw the multitudes as individuals entangled in "decay and depravity, then he turned to his disciples and commanded them to be salt and light."

While describing salt and light as more than social concerns, Land said salt is defensive as a "disinfectant and preservative, and it must touch that which it attempts to affect." He said it is "blasphemous to feed the hungry and not serve the bread of life, clothe the naked without mentioning the whole armor of God or house the homeless without telling them in our Father's house are many mansions."

As examples of Christian societal involvement, Land said, "We should be a preservative, stopping the killing of a pre-born baby every 20 seconds and affecting alternatives for problem pregnancies by opening our homes and churches to troubled mothers and their children."

Land drew applause when he said American women have practiced "child sacrifice to the gods of convenience, materialism and career advancement by killing 40 million babies since 1973." He hastily added, "But, no woman ever got pregnant by herself."

He noted the "sexual double standard intended by the devil" for men to live promiscuously while demanding that their wives be faithful and their daughters remain chaste. Land said, "I've never met a woman yet in the pro-abortion movement who had not been hurt, exploited, used or abandoned by some irresponsible, selfish man."

Land said the light Jesus described "is offensive because it penetrates the darkness, illuminates the gloom and drives away despair and, of course, it must be close enough to be seen and to radiate heat."

"The situation the early church faced is no more difficult or daunting than the one we face," Land said. "We live in a post-Christian culture in which there is no Christian memory -- not even a Christian echo." He said Christians need to study America's neo-paganistic culture in the same way missionaries study foreign cultures, thus facilitating a more effective personal witness to the gospel.

Land challenged the seminarians to bring their convictions to the marketplace of ideas in an attempt to change American culture, saying that every moral wrong corrected in our society occurred "because people of religious faith brought their convictions into the public marketplace and said, 'Slavery is wrong, child labor is wrong, Jim Crow and separate but equal is wrong.'"

"Some people appeal to the decisions of the Supreme Court as determining what's right and wrong," Land said, "but the Supreme Court can only give nine lawyers' opinions about what is legal and illegal, and that's a far cry from what's right and wrong."

Concerning free speech of the First Amendment, Land said Christian young people in public schools should have the free exercise of their religious convictions. "Christian students have the right to gather for Bible study and prayer and even to share their faith.

"While we hear this is offensive to non-Christian people, I say, 'So What!'" Land said he is offended when he hears God's name taken in vain, "and I'm told that's protected speech under the First Amendment. Therefore if God's name uttered in profanity is protected speech, even though it is offensive to believers, then God's name invoked in a prayer is protected speech, even if it offends non-believers.

"And isn't it interesting," Land asked, "that the sexual union God gave to foster the most caring, giving, intimate, loving relationship that humans will know this side of heaven is now expressed in common gutter terms for acts of hostility, aggression and exploitation?"

In an April 14 interview at Southeastern Land challenged preachers to motivate church members to get involved in the political processes of America. "Our pastors need to preach to the issues and tell Southern Baptists that they must vote based only on their loyalty to Christ." Land said too many Christians vote on misplaced loyalties such as their party affiliation, geographical location "and some are even venal enough to vote based on economic benefit."

Land said it is not a denial of separation of church and state to say that some things are right or wrong.

"We cannot legislate beliefs, but we can behaviors; we can't legislate attitudes, but we can legislate action," he said. "And when we legislate behaviors and actions, we are being salt; and when we change hearts and minds, we are being light -- we are changing attitudes and beliefs. Reform alone is not enough. Revival alone is not enough. But when the two are combined, you get reformation, and nothing less than reformation will suffice in turning our culture back to Christ."

Land quoted John MacArthur, pastor of Grace Community Church in Panorama City, Calif., and speaker at the CLC's March conference, who said, "One of the most certain signs that a country is in the midst of God's judgment is when the people will not tolerate anger at evil."

"Those words haunt me, because that is clearly the description of our country," Land said. "Clearly we are in the midst of God's judgment, and I believe that by the end of this decade, we will have determined whether or not we are going to reassert Judeo-Christian values or be cut loose by God and allowed to sink and submerge into a pagan abyss that will bring about an evil marriage between technical and scientific expertise and spiritual ignorance."

--30--

Fire guts part of Philippine
Baptist seminary in Davao

By Mary E. Speidel

Baptist Press
4/26/93

DAVAO CITY, Philippines (BP)--A fire gutted several buildings at the Philippines Baptist Theological Seminary in Davao City, Philippines, and narrowly missed destroying the school's library and dormitories.

Student security guards discovered the blaze early April 22 in a storage area near the classroom building, said Tony Latham, Southern Baptist missionary from Jackson, Tenn., who teaches at the seminary. The fire apparently started in electrical wiring, possibly in a fan switch.

About 70 students were at the seminary but none was seriously injured. Several sustained minor burns while trying to save books and equipment from the library as the blaze approached the building, Latham said.

The fire destroyed the classroom building, the administration office, faculty offices, a conference room and a storage space. The dormitories are connected to this area by covered walkways and would have burned if fire officials had not contained the blaze, according to Latham.

"We're thankful no one was seriously injured and that the fire didn't begin in one of our dorms," Latham said. "We're also thankful the library was spared because buildings in one sense are easier to replace than books."

The fire chief said the inferno was within about five minutes of destroying the library, the largest theological library on the Philippine island of Mindanao. The building sustained some smoke and water damage, but the books were spared, Latham said.

--more--

Students were so concerned about losing the library, which is funded by the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, that they broke windows and entered to salvage books and equipment, Latham said. Two students carried a piano from the chapel in the building's lower level.

Estimated loss for the buildings destroyed by the fire -- not including equipment, books and records inside -- was \$128,000. One of the most critical losses was records for the seminary's extension program and student records kept since the school's beginning, according to Jerry Rankin, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board area director for Southern Asia and the Pacific.

The school's newly elected president, Edgar Aungon, and another faculty member lost their personal libraries and classroom and sermon notes. Latham and his wife, Kathy, who also teaches at the seminary, lost about 85 percent of their professional libraries. Mrs. Latham is from Kosciusko, Miss.

Two other Southern Baptist missionaries teach at the seminary: Mike Andress, from Childress and Monahans, Texas, and Mike Anderson, from Coushatta, La.

The seminary, begun as a Bible school almost 40 years ago by Southern Baptist missionaries, was formerly known as the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary-Davao. About 800 students are enrolled in the seminary's extension program; about 90 students are enrolled in the campus program.

The school is in the process of being incorporated as a Philippine institution, with final paperwork due around May 1, Latham said. The institution has been under Philippine Baptist leadership for several years.

Latham urged Southern Baptists to pray for the seminary community, especially for Filipino leadership. "They're assuming responsibility for the seminary and are excited about it, but now they face an added burden as they try to decide what to do" about rebuilding, he said. The board of trustees, which is 80 percent Filipino, was to meet in emergency session April 27 to determine rebuilding plans.

Meanwhile, the regular school term is expected to begin on schedule during the third week in June, Latham said. Classes will be held in the music building, gymnasium, chapel and library. Summer classes were canceled April 22 and 23 to allow for cleanup following the fire but resumed April 26.

HOUSE MAIL



BAPTIST PRESS

901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

HOUSE MAIL

So. Baptist Library & Archives
901 Commerce
Nashville, TN 37203