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One word can't describe
 Rankin's spirituality

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
 5/31/93

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Utter one word among Southern Baptists and then stand back and await the onslaught of reaction.

That word can be expressed in different ways: tongues, glossolalia, charismatic, Spirit-filled -- terms much confused, abused and incorrectly interchanged.

Attach that word to a Southern Baptist leader and the discussion becomes more intense.

Some have attached it to Jerry Rankin, newly nominated to become the 10th president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

That resulted in the most intense grilling Rankin has ever received on any subject when he faced a 15-member trustee search committee seeking a Foreign Mission Board president.

And it surfaced again in news reports within hours after the committee nominated him unanimously.

Both Rankin and search committee chairman Joel Gregory confronted the issue openly.

Yes, Rankin believes in and seeks gifts of the Spirit. No, he is not a tongues-speaking charismatic.

Gregory said a thorough investigation, which ranged from the United States to the mission field, "totally satisfied" the committee that Rankin "does not practice, teach or advocate glossolalia and has held true to Baptist doctrine."

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"It's unfortunate that Baptists don't have any other terms to use for someone who believes in and practices spiritual gifts than charismatic," Rankin said. "A charismatic advocates baptism of the Holy Spirit following salvation, accompanied by speaking in tongues, and believes that's normal for everyone and is a sign of having the Holy Spirit.

"I don't believe that. I don't believe it's scriptural. I've never believed it."

Why do some think so?

"Perceptions and criticism go back to my experiences in seeking a Spirit-filled life and my openness to gifts of the Spirit based on my biblical understandings and observations on the mission field."

Two years ago Rankin's office sponsored an urban evangelism meeting to learn effective methodology for church growth in Asia. Christians of differing approaches to gifts of the Spirit took part in the conference.

"If we can't learn from people God uses outside our own tradition, then we're in trouble," he said. "We can learn a lot from people -- even if we don't believe everything exactly alike."

As area director for mission work in southern Asia, Rankin also has urged missionaries "not to criticize those whom God is using or be watchdogs over them" -- even in Baptist churches in the region.

All of that made him appear "soft" to some on charismatics and generated criticism from some missionaries and board administrators.

FMB Asia Vice President Bill Wakefield reportedly confronted Rankin over the issue. Wakefield, who has worked with Rankin since he was a student summer missionary in the Philippines and who chose him as area director, acknowledged he has discussed the issue in depth with Rankin. He said he believes Rankin has the spiritual gifts issue correctly in balance. Wakefield denied news reports he threatened to fire Rankin over the issue and expressed support for Rankin's nomination.

Rankin's beliefs about gifts of the Spirit run too deep to renounce. His time on the mission field in Indonesia ingrained them in him.

"I was hit by my own inadequacy and that I had no business being there without the empowering of the Holy Spirit and assurance of God's presence in my life," he explained.

Every morning about 4:30 or 5:00 Rankin arises to "spend an hour or two with the Lord" in prayer and Bible study. It's part of his years-long pilgrimage toward the Spirit-filled life.

That pilgrimage, he said, has led both to a source of power through God's spirit and to the misunderstandings he faces from some. But Rankin accepts the validity of spiritual gifts on the basis of his belief in the Bible, which teaches about gifts of the Spirit, and his observation of their power at work in Asia.

Exposed to higher biblical criticism in his studies, he "came to the conviction and deliberate decision that you cannot discount any portion of the Bible for any reason and still hold to the absolute authority of the Word of God." He believes "God inspired Scripture in its entirety and that his Holy Spirit continues to illumine it today.

"Therefore, I cannot in conscience throw out any portion of the Bible, either on the basis of ultra-dispensationalist theory (which dismisses some gifts of the Spirit) or on the basis of higher criticism," he said.

"I have to be open to spiritual gifts because it's the sovereignty of God that determines and dispenses those gifts, not any one of us," Rankin added. "How can you say spiritual gifts are valid and yet refuse to be open to receive any of them? How can you arbitrarily say some spiritual gifts are valid and others are not? To do either infringes on the Lordship of God."

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Rankin has experienced spiritual power in his early morning sessions with God. "I've been so overwhelmed with a sense of the Lord's presence that my praise could not be verbalized," he said. "Other times I've been interceding with such a deeply burdened heart that my words have become like the 'groanings that could not be uttered'" as written in the New Testament Book of Romans.

"That's not public," he said. "I don't urge others to do the same, and it doesn't make me any holier than anyone else. I wish it did, but it doesn't."

But it does make him expect the unexpected from God, acutely aware that "you can't box in his sovereignty or predetermine how his power will be manifested."

Rankin's belief in the power of God's Spirit to work the unexpected goes beyond his biblical views and personal prayer. Like many missionaries around the world, he's seen it work miracles in situations foreign to the Western mind -- situations "which defy explanation."

The power of God, he said, can -- and does -- heal, cast out evil spirits and change lives in one dramatic stroke.

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Bulgarian evangelicals form
alliance to protect membership By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
5/31/93

SOFIA, Bulgaria (BP)--Evangelicals in Bulgaria are joining forces to protect themselves from a media hate campaign they claim has been stirred up by the Orthodox Church and leftover communists.

Forming an alliance May 10, they adopted a constitution and drafted a proposed law for religious liberty. As their first president they elected Teodor Angelov, president of the Baptist Union of Bulgaria.

Angelov and other leaders offered their draft law in meetings with the nation's religious affairs chief and with an adviser on religion to President Zhelyu Zhelev. They also will present it to Parliament.

The group's organizational meeting in Sofia, the capital, included about 100 representatives of Baptist, Methodist, Church of God, Pentecostal and Congregational churches. They named their group United Evangelical Churches in Bulgaria.

Cults such as Hare Krishna and the Mormons have clouded Eastern Europe's religious landscape since the region cast off communism. The Bulgarian media have decried their influence and lumped evangelicals with them, calling them all sects.

"The awful calamity is that along with many of these sects and behind the cover of faith come drugs, organized crime, terrorist groups and dirty money laundering," one newspaper article stated. "This is why the concern for the state's own survival is coming to the fore here." In another article, the author proposes allowing only the Bulgarian Orthodox, Muslim, Catholic, Armenian and Jewish faiths to function.

When Southern Baptist representatives Bill and June Wardlaw sought their yearly visa renewals in Bulgaria in May, the passport bureau director told them if it was up to him he would give them one more month and then send them home for good, Wardlaw said. They were able to secure visas from a local office nearer Kazanluk, the central Bulgarian town where they moved in April. The Wardlaws are from Texarkana, Texas, and West Palm Beach, Fla., respectively.

"People think the evangelicals are doing all kinds of weird things behind closed doors," Wardlaw said. One article he heard was printed in the Black Sea town of Varna claimed evangelical pastors eat their children for breakfast. In a city on the Romanian border, an Orthodox priest told young people it's OK to beat up on evangelical pastors, he added.

Wardlaw hasn't been threatened personally. But he was with a young Bulgarian pastor when an Orthodox priest started telling the pastor Western missionaries aren't needed in Bulgaria "because it was already a Christian country." He told Wardlaw he should go someplace like Turkey instead.

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The anti-evangelical campaign is beginning to affect day-to-day relationships. One woman who plays host to a congregation in her home was told by a neighbor that if she didn't stop the worship services, the neighbor's husband would use police connections to close them down.

"It does not appear to be something that will just blow over," Wardlaw said of the campaign.

Bulgarians face the threat that a friendship between a radical element in the Orthodox Church and government leaders will lead to the exclusion of other religions, charged Baptist leader Angelov.

"This campaign against us is obviously very well organized and has deep roots," he said. "They are firing furiously against us." Government and Orthodox leaders have linked Bulgarian nationalism to the issue.

In their meeting with government officials, evangelical leaders stressed the role evangelicals have played in Bulgarian history. During communist years, evangelicals were imprisoned for their faith like others.

"Now we have the right to existence," Angelov said.

Evangelicals' rapid growth has angered some Orthodox leaders, Angelov reported. Baptists are a part of that growth. When Bulgarian communism fell, 850 members in nine churches constituted the Baptist union. Now Wardlaw puts Baptist strength at between 2,000 and 3,000 members in 25 to 30 congregations.

In one Baptist congregation meeting in eastern Bulgaria since December 1991, all but two of the 20 members are new believers. In another congregation meeting in an apartment all but three of the 15 people are newly baptized believers or "seekers," Wardlaw said.

Bulgarian Baptists are thankful for the influence of Southern Baptists through the Foreign Mission Board, which has sent short-term personnel in addition to the Wardlaws, Angelov said. But Baptists, like others, are concerned about the availability of visas for personnel in the future.

"Pray for religious freedom in Bulgaria," Wardlaw said. "Right now it's kind of hanging in the balance."

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International Baptist Men urged
to unite to win world for Christ By Lonnie Wilkey

Baptist Press
5/31/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The world will not be saved without a united, multi-national effort, the president of the nation's largest African American Baptist denomination told an international gathering in Nashville.

"If this world is going to be saved, it is going to be saved by men of all, races, classes and creeds. We've got to learn to love one another," said Theodore J. Jemison.

Jemison, a Baton Rouge, La., pastor and president of the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., keynoted the opening session of the Sixth World Conference for Baptist Men May 27-30 at the Baptist World Center, headquarters for the 8-million-member denomination.

About 600 people from 17 countries attended the conference sponsored by Baptist World Alliance's Men's Department. It ran concurrently with Baptist Men's University, a training conference of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tenn.

Two intense days of conferences, interspersed with evening plenary sessions, were capped off with a neighborhood evangelistic rally at Nashville's Pearl-Cohn High School featuring Southern Baptist layman and country entertainer Jerry Clower and Jack Stanton, a Southern Baptist evangelist from Bolivar, Mo. Stanton "pinch hit" for E.V. Hill, a National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., pastor who had been scheduled for the rally but was unable to attend.

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Before the rally, Stanton led a group of internationals to canvass the area, sharing the gospel and inviting residents to the rally and a free meal provided by the Tennessee Baptist Convention Brotherhood Department's mobile disaster relief feeding unit. The team fed more than 300 meals, reported Cameron Byler, Tennessee Brotherhood director.

Stanton reported several professions of faith were made during the afternoon visitation effort.

Following musical presentations from various countries, humorist Jerry Clower told the crowd that "Christianity works." He underscored the point by describing God's provision to his family during his Great Depression childhood in rural Mississippi.

Clower emphasized to the international crowd that his achievements in country music, while enjoyable, have not been the most important things in his life. "The greatest thing that ever happened to me was when I became a Christian, and the greatest thing in my life is to tell others that Jesus is the answer," he said.

Stanton, filling in for Hill, also shared how his life had been changed by accepting Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

Growing up in a single-parent home in East St. Louis, Ill., Stanton, now director of the institute of evangelism at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., has since visited 79 countries and preached in the largest church in the world, Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea.

"I believe that if you'd come to my home, and sit at our table, and hear my wife and me talk, you'd sense a joy and a love and a trust. Our home's happy. That doesn't mean we don't owe money, that we don't hurt, that we don't cry.

"But in the midst of the problems, God is real, and joy is there, and peace is ours," Stanton said.

While the service was geared to evangelism, Costa Marcio of Brazil was moved to make a decision to be a missionary. "I was moved by the Holy Spirit to do this," Marcio said. "I feel everybody around the world ought to know about Jesus Christ and I made a hard decision to be a missionary."

A government clerk in Brazil, Marcio said he plans to begin making preparations to become a missionary upon his return home.

A European Baptist leader also addressed the conference. J. Rea Grant, executive director of the Baptist Union of Ireland, observed the task of reaching men for Christ is basic, difficult, strategic and urgent.

He noted churches must do a better job of reaching men for Christ. He observed that in almost all Baptist congregations worldwide women outnumber the men. "Doesn't that prove the fact we need to reach men?" he asked?

Grant cited the problems of reaching men who do not know the Lord. "It is difficult even to get the men in the church to invite other men to men's groups. Yet Christian men are the key to reaching other men," he said.

Brotherhood Commission President James Williams, in the closing message, challenged Baptist Men to "hunger and thirst for the Word of God" and to develop "roots deep in Christ."

Williams said Christians must be well-grounded in God's Word to avoid being "tossed about."

"The reason why so many within the evangelical church these days are easily seduced by false teaching is this: They are undernourished in the truth of God," he said.

Williams challenged conference participants to go out and use their gifts to "help our brothers and sisters 'grow up' in Christ."

Besides the plenary speakers, 46 conferences on a myriad of subjects were offered to help Baptist Men in various areas of ministry. Topics and highlights of some of the conferences included:

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-- Pulpit-pew relationships. A healthy relationship "between the pews and the pulpit" is vital to a church's success in ministry, said Leroy Davis, a National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., pastor from Memphis, Tenn. He observed the biggest problem between pastors and their congregations is understanding who the real leader of the church is.

"The pastor is not the leader; he's the overseer. The Holy Spirit is in charge and Jesus is the only one who can claim authority. When that is understood, everything else will fall in line," he said.

-- Christian leadership. A Christian leader is a person "under God's control who's willing to influence God's people to accomplish God's purposes," said Fred Roach, a Southern Baptist layman from Dallas. "It's important for a leader to have a right relationship with God and a sensitivity to the spiritual basis of that relationship."

-- Black-white relationships. Black and white Baptists need to talk with each other formally and informally to overcome barriers that divide them, a multi-ethnic group agreed. "If we are sincerely committed to reaching our world for Christ, we've got to understand each other," said Eddie Pettit, director of Baptist Men for the Brotherhood Commission.

Walter Cade, president of the Baptist World Alliance's Men's Department, said he was pleased with the meeting, especially with the number of international participants.

"This was one of the best conferences we have had in recent years and I was moved at the number of men from around the world who sacrificed to come," Cade said.

Cade said he especially was touched by the contingent from Cuba, the only communist country represented at the conference. "This was a milestone for them as it was their first men's meeting."

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Brotherhood Commission. Individual state editors also mailed photos of speakers from their states. Steve Barber, Wendy Ryan, Louis Moore, Chip Alford and Carol Woodfin contributed to this story.

Black, white Baptists need
dialogue to overcome barriers

By Louis Moore

Baptist Press
5/31/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Black and white Baptists need to talk with each other in formal and informal ways to overcome the barriers that divide them, a multi-ethnic group agreed during a meeting here.

"We have to create dialogue situations wherever we are -- where we work, where we live, where we shop, where we go to church, everywhere," said Eddie Pettit, director of Baptist Men for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission of Memphis, Tenn.

"If we are sincerely committed to reaching our world for Christ, we've got to understand each other," he said.

Pettit led the "Dialogue on White-Black Missions Relationships" during the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men May 27-30 at Nashville's Baptist World Center, headquarters for the nation's largest African American Baptist denomination.

About 600 participants from 15 countries attended the conference, sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance's Men's Department. It ran concurrently with Baptist Men's University, a Brotherhood Commission training conference.

"There is no such thing as a black Baptist or a white Baptist," said one black seminar participant, Marion Carter of Ogden, Utah. "We are all one in Jesus Christ."

Pettit, who is Anglo, agreed but responded: "We do deal with the white perspective and the black perspective."

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Much of the discussion focused on the personal and cultural gulf that divides most white Baptists and most black Baptists.

"Will we ever be able to deal with all the baggage each of us is carrying?" asked another African American participant, Millard H. Jackson of Long Beach, Calif. He said members of both groups have deep-seated negative stereotypes and misperceptions of each other.

Among the issues he said continue to divide black and white Baptists is that many African Americans today still view Southern Baptists as descendants of people who formed a new denomination in 1845 to appoint a slaveholder as a missionary.

Pettit and others pointed out Southern Baptists have changed over the past 148 years and many Southern Baptists regret that early racist heritage.

"People have all sorts of stereotypes, but when we do missions together we begin to tear down those stereotypes," Pettit said.

George Gossett, an African American from Memphis, said, "We (African Americans) perceive that you (Southern Baptists) want to do to us what the Catholics did to the American Indians -- they came to preach their faith but also to change their culture."

"It always seems like it is the whites who are going to the blacks to do missions," said Jackson. "This creates a pity-mode in which blacks and whites are not seen as equal."

Pettit said the Brotherhood Commission is eager to help black and white Baptists to work together on mission projects.

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Speaker urges men to be careful
about 'too much secular advice' By Steve Barber

Baptist Press
5/31/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The secular world's call for men to "express their emotions and feelings" more fully is a challenge to the church to "turn them toward God," according to an Alabama public relations executive who leads a church-based ministry to men.

J. Paul Till told a conference audience at the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men today's men -- Christian and non-Christian -- are "miserable" because their lives are full of "garbage" that includes festering physical and emotional wounds from their growing-up years. One outgrowth, Till said, is the current popularity of the book "Iron John" by Robert Bly, viewed as the leader of today's "men's movement."

"We are told in James 5 to confess our sins and be healed. But how can we get help from the body of Christ if no one knows our pain?" Till asked. "We can weep, but (the world tells us) we can't do it in public. It's serious not to allow your feelings to be released. We've followed too much secular advice, like 'big boys don't cry,' and not enough biblical advice."

A counseling ministry can help men deal with old "wounds" that must be "cleaned and treated before they are bandaged," allowing them to finally heal properly, Till said. These wounds can include verbal, sexual or physical abuse during childhood, alcohol or drug addiction on the part of parents, or parents absent due to death or divorce.

"You've got all this stuff stored up ... and you reach your capacity. The top flies off in the form of rage or depression," Till said. "You've got to empty the kettle."

Till compared the wounds to damage and disease in the trunk of each man's personal, spiritual "fruit tree," eroding its strength and eventually causing it to collapse.

"I had to clean out my tree trunk and empty my kettle to fully experience Galatians 5:22 (listing the fruits of the Spirit)," Till said. "You've got two choices. You can express your feelings or you can bottle them up and 'numb it.'"

Many men today, he added, have "just decided not to feel" anything.

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Till encouraged men to find healing by committing themselves to "begin a journey" that includes participation in Christian self-help groups and in self-education, exploring what Christian authors have to say about the emotional needs of men. And they should talk to their pastors about starting support groups.

"The key is to get men started talking with other men," he said.

Till, who leads an eight-week session for men at First Baptist Church of Montgomery, Ala., will begin a year-long series of articles on men's issues with the October 1993 edition of "Missions Today," the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission's magazine for men.

About 600 people from 17 countries attended the May 27-30 conference, sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance's Men's Department. It ran concurrently with Baptist Men's University, a training conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission of Memphis, Tenn.

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Dixon exhorts men to prayer
for their children's sake

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
5/31/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Most men know far more about fishing and hunting than teaching their children to pray, to hear from God through the Bible and "to get on mission with God," Bob Dixon told a prayer workshop during the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men.

Dixon, Texas Baptist Men's executive director, said the last verse in the Old Testament and some of the first words concerning Jesus' ministry reflect strong spiritual expectations of men.

"And he (the Lord) shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children," Malachi 4:6 in the Old Testament states, "and the heart of the children to their fathers"

In Luke 1:17 in the New Testament, an angel tells Zacharias the priest that Jesus will "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children"

If children are to learn spiritual truth in an important way, Dixon said, "... they'll learn it from their fathers."

"God is looking for men again to show that he is the Most High God," Dixon said -- and it begins with prayer and hearing from God through the Scriptures.

"Nothing in the kingdom comes except by prayer," Dixon said, even the hastening of Jesus' return, according to the Bible.

"Prayer is anything your Father can do," he said. "It is the power of the believer. It is supernatural. The Holy Spirit of the living God has come into our lives when we become children of God."

That Holy Spirit, Dixon said, is praying for believers and is a constant companion.

If Jesus, via the Holy Spirit, is interceding for believers, Dixon asked, how important is it, then, for believers to learn to pray for each other?

Jesus' last words on earth were an exhortation to seek the Holy Spirit's power to win the world, Dixon said, citing Acts 1:8 in the New Testament: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you"

And Jesus' followers, as recorded in Acts, sought spiritual power time after time through prayer -- "Always, prayer preceded every bit of the activity of God in the first century church," Dixon said.

He told of ways Texas Baptist Men leaders have prayed about responding to human needs crises around the world -- and with regularity, "The Father had far more in mind for his activity than we did" to multiply the effectiveness of ministry efforts initiated simply in prayer.

"This didn't happen in my life for a long time," Dixon said. He had so much to do in his church work, he said, that "I left the most important undone."

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Then, in the mid-1970s, in encounters with Don Miller, a Fort Worth, Texas, prayer evangelist, Dixon said he was stirred to a life of prayer.

In meeting with God in prayer and reading Scripture, Dixon said, God has promised him, "I will feed you every morning."

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Agricultural missions
can feed the world

By Connie Davis

Baptist Press
5/31/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The way to feed the world is to involve churches in an agricultural missions project, a retired agricultural professor told a group at the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men May 27-30 in Nashville.

Baptists will give money cooperatively to missions through the Cooperative Program, but when they get involved, even if just to raise money for a project, they learn, pray and get personally involved, said Don Blasingame of Starkville, Miss.

He is the former coordinator of the National Fellowship of Baptist Agriculturalists, which is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

In a world where 15 million people die each year from malnutrition, missionaries have learned spiritual needs are masked by physical needs, Blasingame said. But, to meet the world's physical needs, Southern Baptists support about 50 agricultural foreign missionaries. Only 50 additional agricultural missionaries are supported by other denominations.

They need help, he reported from his 25 years of missions experience, in the form of volunteers such as veterinarians or well-diggers and materials such as seed.

"You can be organized to the hilt and have resources coming out of your ears, but if you don't have laymen committed to it, you're not going to have much come of it," Blasingame said of agricultural missions efforts.

To foster commitment, Americans don't need more information. Instead, they need channels for their efforts, he said. Americans should be challenged to give the proceeds from one acre of cotton during one year or 250 bales of hay to make a difference, he said.

Groups like churches or Royal Ambassador chapters could "adopt" agricultural missionaries and ask how they can help. He noted one request of the agricultural fellowship was for a short-term volunteer who was a beekeeper. The missionary later reported the health of children noticeably improved because of the availability of honey.

Blasingame added response should be developed with on-site information. Some expensive projects without such information have been ineffective, Blasingame noted.

"We don't bring in John Deere tractors and four-row cotton-pickers but we use what they have to help them," Blasingame said. Response also should be coordinated through the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va., he added.

And local needs can't be ignored, he said. Baptists also should do agricultural missions at home. Troubled youth could be involved in a gardening project that would provide their families with produce. Produce from a garden could be used in a feeding program for poor people. Children or youth could help nursing home residents nurture gardens, he proposed.

Baptists "cannot set up a welfare system for the rest of the world" but they can "help people feed their families better than they're doing now," Blasingame said.

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**Military personnel prime targets
for church ministry, leaders agree** **By Connie Davis**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Practically every local church has a military connection that, if pursued for ministry purposes, could reach more than 3 million military personnel and their dependents, reported a conference leader during the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men May 27-30 in Nashville.

Don Hadley, a North Carolina pastor and author of "Ministry With the Military," noted Baptists have soldiers -- literally -- who are "being sent around the world at government expense."

Yet churches need to do their part to support those soldiers and develop new ministries, Hadley told conferees gathered at the Baptist World Center, headquarters of the National Baptist Convention U.S.A, Inc.

The convention hosted the conference, sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance's Men's Department. It ran concurrently with Baptist Men's University, a training conference of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission of Memphis, Tenn.

Hadley, who has led First Baptist Church in Havelock, near Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station for 20 years, said churches, even with no geographic connection to a base, should commission those entering the military as missionaries and maintain contact with them during their service.

Such an outreach to the military is important, agreed Jerry Horn of Universal City, Texas, vice president of Texas Baptist Men's Military Fellowship. Although the military believes it takes care of its own, "We don't do that good of a job," said Horn, a retired Air Force officer.

"Churches near military stations must examine their prejudices," Hadley said. Such prejudices are attitudes that exclude multi-racial families from acceptance or military personnel from leadership because of transitory lifestyles, he said.

"Many think they (military personnel) are poor church members. They are wrong," Hadley said.

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**Active retirement requires
planning, Baptist men told**

By Carol Woodfin

**Baptist Press
5/31/93**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Christian believers are called to be active in God's work until the day they die -- so they should plan for an active retirement, said an expert on retirement during a workshop at the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men in Nashville May 29.

David Petty, professor of sociology and gerontology at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, speaking on "Retirement by Design," noted retirement is a fairly new phenomenon in the United States.

Until this century, people worked as long as they could or until they died. But in the 20th century, Americans have added about 25 years to their average life expectancy. Society has had to "make some new rules" so that "it's OK to be retired."

The average age of retirement currently is just under 60 years and declining, Petty said. So people now spend a significant portion of their lives in retirement.

Most Americans will retire with a living spouse. Many will still be caring for elderly parents. Some, known as "the sandwich generation," take care of parents as well as "boomerangers," children who have returned home for a variety of reasons. Each of these situations will require emotional adjustments.

Plan now for a successful retirement, Petty urged. Being aware of changes to come can help persons cope later.

Retirees face not only physical but also spiritual changes.

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"What is spiritual maturity?" Petty asked, noting, "God made us resilient. We can adapt to these changes."

Petty offered practical advice on how to estimate retirement assets, incomes and expenses. He recalled Christ's words, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:19-21). Petty warned the men not to "rob God" by failing to give of their money to the church.

He urged workshop participants to take care of their health now for healthier retirement years. Health includes physical and emotional well-being, he said.

Petty called on men to develop good eating habits, get regular exercise and maintain an appropriate weight. "It's never too late to begin better habits," he said.

Other changes retirees face are social. A prevalent view of aging in American society is that of "disengagement," said Petty. As people grow older, they tend to withdraw from society, and society in turn tends to withdraw from them.

Instead, Petty advocated an "activity theory" of aging. People are social animals, he said. When they retire from the work force, "they need to anticipate losing social relationships." To fill the gap, Petty advised developing new contacts and relationships before retirement begins.

Plan to be productive in some other way than your job, Petty said. American society is so geared to the Protestant work ethic that many people closely identify themselves with their work title. They cannot see themselves as productive, except at work. "What happens to your identity when you put that title aside?" he asked.

"Is it possible to replace this work ethic with a leisure ethic?" he asked. Petty urged retirees to make their "recreation" time one of "re-creation," to be creative in their leisure.

You will gain over 2,340 hours a year by not going in to work each day, Petty said. "What will you do with the time?"

Opportunities for volunteer service abound, he said. "Every community has needs." For Southern Baptists, doors are open for retiree mission volunteers at home and overseas, he noted.

Challenging men to take advantage of these occasions for ministry when they retire, he stated, "You never retire from God's work."

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Cubans' search for hope yields
new opportunities for the gospel By Wendy Ryan

Baptist Press
5/31/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Members of the Cuban delegation of Baptist men at the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men in Nashville say "people in Cuba today are looking for hope."

"Everyone knows about the economic difficulties in Cuba," said Luciano Marquez Jr., pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Guines, Cuba, "but there is also a social, moral and spiritual crisis as ideals conflict with reality. This is especially true of young people."

Marquez, who is also director of young men for the men's department of the Western Baptist Convention of Cuba, said many people who left the church 20 years ago are returning to church.

"Many young people born during the Castro regime never attended church before," Marquez said, "and the churches are giving young people the opportunity not only to learn about Jesus Christ but to witness to their faith."

Many of those returning to church do so in hundreds of home churches.

While it was never against the law to meet in homes for worship, fear of the Castro regime and of informers everywhere kept people from meeting in homes. But because of the driving need to find meaning for their lives, "people are not afraid to meet now," Marquez said. "They are desperate for hope."

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"Historically all evangelical churches in Cuba start in homes as mission points and, when they grow, become a church," said Luciano Morejon, pastor of a Cuban Baptist church in Miami.

Morejon, who left Cuba three years ago, also credited the rise in church interest to the influence of people allowed in Cuba to preach the gospel. During the last 10 years the government increasingly has allowed more people into the country to preach, Morejon said, adding this "has helped to influence people."

Another Cuban, Jose M. Martiz, a Baptist pastor and theological professor in Havana, credits the change to prayer.

"The changes in Cuba are not the result of political changes in Europe or because of the economic situation," Martiz said. "It is the result of the good testimony of Christians and mostly because of prayer."

Martiz observed, "There are really no political changes, the situation is the same. But for us that does not matter. We are not looking for political change, we are looking for opportunities to work," he said.

The changes have opened doors to share Jesus Christ, the Cubans agreed.

"It is a wonderful opportunity for us to work in Cuba," Martiz said, "because we know that anything we want to do, we must depend on the Lord to do it."

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Leadership is spiritual,
Fred Roach emphasizes

By Wendy Ryan

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NASHVILLE (BP)--A Christian leader is a person "under God's control who's willing to influence God's people to accomplish God's purposes," said Fred Roach, a Southern Baptist layman and president of the Leadership Center at the Baylor Health Care System in Waco, Texas.

"You're really a leader when you can influence some person to action," Roach said, "and the influence must be in the use of their spiritual giftedness."

Roach taught an international group of pastors and lay people some key leadership concepts during the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men May 27-30 in Nashville.

About 600 people from 17 countries attended the conference sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance's Men's Department. It ran concurrently with Baptist Men's University, a training conference of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tenn.

"There was a thirst for knowledge in that group," Roach later said of his class, because "there is a void in training in our churches in what spiritual leadership is all about."

Effective leadership comes out of the basic character of a person and is based on relationships, Roach said. "It is not personality-oriented."

"It is important for a leader to have a right relationship with God and a sensitivity to the spiritual basis of that relationship," Roach said, adding a leader also must have right relationships to family and church, all of which is a foundational base to minister to a needy world.

"Sometimes we try to minister out of emptiness," Roach said, "but to be effective leaders, we must be empowered ourselves." He emphasized "leadership is not power itself or position" but, rather, relying on God's power.

As one who has studied and taught leadership concepts for many years, Roach observed, "... people involvement is the greatest recent change in leadership concepts."

"People no longer want to be told what to do; they want to be involved in the process of deciding what (is) to be done." Roach attributed this societal change to "the baby boomer group."

"They just don't accept things" he said.

However, Roach said, there is a leadership balance that swings from authoritarian to participatory, and "sometimes you need to be authoritarian but you had better be right."

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**Pastor challenges churches
to the work needed for growth By Carol Woodfin**

NASHVILLE (BP)--A church trying to carry out ministries they are not called and gifted to do can be as painful as an ill-fitting yoke is to an ox, a pastor told workshop participants at the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men May 29 in Nashville.

George T. Brooks Sr., speaking on "A Church Prepared for Growth," said instead of copying successful programs of other churches, each congregation must find its own niche.

Brooks, pastor of the 590-member St. James Missionary Baptist Church, a National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., congregation in Nashville, recalled Christ's charge: "Take my yoke upon you . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:29-30).

"You don't put a yoke on an ox for them to stay in the stall," Brooks noted. Oxen and yoke must be compatible, he said.

Churches must seek to be "biblical rather than traditional," Brooks said. "You can have an active church and still have an irrelevant church."

Brooks asked workshop participants to consider if everything done in their churches during the past 30 years has been relevant. In his own church, Brooks related, four auxiliaries have disbanded in recent years because they had outlived their usefulness.

In Brooks' nine years as pastor, St. James has doubled its membership and quadrupled its budget.

"You have to minister to people at the point of their need," he said. Sometimes you have to add ministries, sometimes delete them.

"Don't maintain programs just for history," Brooks warned. "The way your church looks now may not be sufficient for the 21st century."

Church growth is not only a question of numerical growth, but a growth in sincerity, he said. "If you are not sincere, then it eventually will show up."

Churches that want to grow must be persistent in prayer, he said, adding prayer helps church members to stay in focus.

Be prepared to face challenges if you are to grow, Brooks warned. "A growing church is expensive," he said, observing more people attending means, for example, higher water and electric bills and more money spent on Sunday school literature.

If a church decides simply to maintain its current membership and not to grow, then it probably could cut its budget by two-thirds, Brooks observed. "A church that wants to grow must be faithful in her stewardship."

Many churches are not growing "because that looks like too much work," he said. Brooks admitted it is easier to preach one sermon on Sunday than two. A larger church requires more effort, more planning sessions and more organization.

Discord in churches is another hindrance to church growth, he said. "A church needs to be at peace, loving one another. A fighting church will not grow."

Brooks urged churches that want to grow to follow their pastor's leadership. "A church has to give the pastor room to exercise the gifts God has given him," Brooks said.

He advised against numerous boards within a local church. "Boards suggest authority and stiffness," he said, observing "a lot of missions and ministries die in board meetings."

A good pastor will "be a strong authoritarian," Brooks said. "He may even look like a tyrant because his members trust him so well." Yet churches where members question everything a pastor does remain weak, he claimed.

"A pastor should delegate responsibilities, but not relegate responsibilities he wishes to avoid," Brooks said. "The pastor of a growing church will do the work of 10 people but will also put 10 people to work."

Pastors must be available and sensitive to their congregations. Brooks asked: "How can a pastor minister to people he does not know? I've got to live among my members on a daily basis."

Brooks noted a pastor should exhibit humility, "not strut like a peacock Whenever there is self-exaltation, he is preparing for a fall."

A pastor of a church prepared for growth will be courageous, Brooks said. "He is no wimp, no yo-yo!" He will need to be there for his members, to stand up for them when they need it.

He also must be "diligent in preaching," Brooks said. "His brain has to sweat when he is preaching, not just his body." When people come to church they need to be fed, "and not just junk food."

"If your church is to grow, you've got to practice your preaching," Brooks said.

A church prepared for growth is active in her faith and will magnify Jesus in whatever she does, the pastor said. "Church growth and faith cannot be separated."

He advised workshop participants to envision their church as they wanted it to be next year, to set goals and to ask, "Where can God take me?" Brooks exclaimed: "If your target is nothing, you're guaranteed to hit it!"

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Good relationship vital between
'pews and pulpit', pastor says

By Chip Alford

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5/31/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--A healthy relationship "between the pews and the pulpit" is vital to a church's success in ministry, a bivocational Baptist pastor said. And the first step in achieving one is understanding who's really in charge.

"The biggest problem we have between pastors and church members is understanding who the real leader of the church is," Leroy Davis told participants in a May 28 seminar at the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men in Nashville, Tenn.

"The pastor is not the leader; he's the overseer," he said. "The Holy Spirit is in charge and Jesus is the only one who can claim authority. When that is understood, everything else will fall in line."

Davis, pastor of First Baptist of Mount Olive, a National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., church in Memphis, Tenn., and station manager for a commuter airline service, said one of the first signs of trouble between pastors and church members is a breakdown in communication.

"There are always going to be disagreements and different ideas of how things should be done. But we have to be willing to sit down and talk about problems," he said.

Many times, he added, people are unaware that problems exist. A problem shared by a participant in Davis' seminar provided a perfect illustration.

The man admitted he is intimidated by his pastor and said it is affecting his ability to worship at church. When asked if he had talked with his pastor about the problem, he answered, "No, I wouldn't feel comfortable talking with him about it."

Davis encouraged the man to pray, search the Scriptures for guidance and wisdom and consider talking with his pastor one-on-one.

"For every problem that we have, the answer is in the Bible. The answers are there before we even ask the question. We just have to look," he said.

Another key to improving relationships between pastors and church members is flexibility, Davis said.

"We've got people who don't want anything going on in the church if they didn't think of it first or if they can't do it their way. . . . We need to take the 'I' out of whatever we are trying to accomplish. It's not our church; the Holy Spirit is in charge."

Inflexibility is often caused by spiritual immaturity, Davis said.

"Growing in the faith is so important. We've got way too many grown-up babies in our churches," he said.

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Among other suggestions Davis made for improving relationships and building a unified ministry team were:

- involving both the pastor and church members in planning, both long-range and short-term.
- dividing ministry responsibilities among members according to their spiritual gifts.
- affirming one another in a spirit of love and cooperation.
- setting goals, working together to achieve them and celebrating victories.
- providing programs, events and other opportunities to allow the pastor and church members to get better acquainted.
- simplify communication, planning and the church organization.

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Examining assumptions can unlock
church conflicts, pastor advises By Art Toalston

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NASHVILLE (BP)--If there's a conflict in the church, there's lots to be learned -- and dealt with -- in the conflicting parties' assumptions, according to a workshop leader at the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men May 27-30.

Roland Porter, pastor of Berean Baptist Church in Jackson, Tenn., told a "Resolving Conflicts" workshop May 28, "We don't know enough about other peoples' assumptions" when conflict arises.

Conflicts arise from intellectual, internal, political, economic, religious and other concerns of people and can be fueled by past experience and authority figures, said Porter, whose church belongs to the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc.

"There is something that is not resolved within them that is causing the problem," Porter said.

Christian fellowship -- "Christians hanging around together," getting to know each other -- can be extremely valuable as a way for a church to lessen the chance of disruptive conflicts, he added.

"When we are dealing with conflict we are being Christ-like," Porter said, reminding, "Christ dealt with conflict."

From the Bible, Porter pointed to the "reconciliation model" of believers dealing with conflict outlined in Matthew 18; the "reconciliation motive" of restoration to faith and relationship with the body of Christ, Galatians 6:1-2; and the "reconciliation mission" of being ambassadors for Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:20.

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Missionary family stirred
by move to the mountains

By Tim Nicholas

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5/31/93

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--Calls to missions extend beyond mom and dad into the lives of their children. Witness the story of the Wallace family, Southern Baptist missionaries to Peru.

In early 1991, Karl Wallace, who had been working in evangelism and literature distribution, began thinking about leaving Lima, the capitol of Peru, for a more hands-on type of ministry. It would mean either moving to a rural area of Peru or perhaps even taking an assignment in a different country.

Two possibilities opened up in Peru -- one on the coast, another in the northwestern mountains. He consulted his wife, Peggy, who was open to the idea. Son, Jacob, 13, thought that would be fine.

But Christina, 16, "was adamant about it and didn't want to leave," Karl recounted.

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"I didn't want to have anything to do with it," Christina said.

But, she said, because her parents were missionaries, "I went through the motions and prayed about it. It was funny, because I found out several of my school friends were going to be leaving. Little by little certain things I'd been looking forward to dwindled to nothing." She paused. "It was obvious God didn't want me in Lima."

At the same time Karl was interim pastor of their church in Lima. One of his sermons was on God's call to Isaiah who responded unconditionally with "Here am I, send me."

Christina said that after that sermon she realized she was putting conditions on the move. "It helped me realize how much praying can do for you -- not just words. You really need to talk to God." She added, "It can be easier if you cooperate -- talk to him and really listen. Now (as a furlough year ends) I can't wait to get back."

During the family's furlough in Mississippi this year, Christina attended Jericho, a missions camp, and "started thinking maybe God wants me in missions," she said. She isn't certain it will be missions but, last September, she made a commitment to full-time Christian service.

The move from Lima to Cajamarca "was a big test for us in many ways," Karl said. Back in Lima, Peggy had the house to herself while Karl was at work and the children in school. Now Karl studies at the house and every morning Peggy and the kids go to a rented building for school. She is home teaching their children, an activity that makes for real togetherness. Said Karl, "Mom knows if you have homework." Added Jacob, "You can't hide a grade."

The rented building also is used for housing more than 400 volunteers who have helped in special projects in the region in recent years. The Foreign Mission Board has poured about \$2 million into the area since 1986 -- for 40 water wells providing drinking water for about 100,000 people, 50 miles of irrigating canals and just under 40 miles of secondary access roads, plus a holding reservoir, small animal projects, drought resistant wheat and corn and the teaching of handicrafts as income sources.

Karl's job is in pastoral education. He offers a lay institute for leaders of the 27 churches in the area, 25 of which have grown out of the community development projects. "The people are by and large agriculturally based," said Karl, and either illiterate or severely limited in educational capabilities.

So in the lay institute, Karl does not use much lecturing. Instead, he uses the "storying" concept. "I didn't dream it up," he said. The oral tradition is as old as civilization itself. God told Moses to tell the people of the great and wonderful things God had done.

"The basic principle is to take a biblical truth and tell the Bible story in understandable story form." He adjusts the story to meet the understanding level of the audience.

Except, "We can't be spontaneous," Karl said. If he doesn't tell the story the same way each time, someone will point out he had changed the story. "They might think the truths have changed," he said.

The principle of oral transmission of history is culturally founded, both in the Inca tradition from which the people have descended, and the Catholic tradition.

The difficulty, Karl said, is to make the application in addition to getting the stories memorized. "This is a big transition for me because for the last eight or nine years, I'd been involved in theological education by extension at the bachelor level," he said.

Peggy's transition was in taking over the educational responsibilities of the children. This past semester at Hinds Community College near Jackson, she took four courses, including calculus, in order to keep up.

In Lima, Peggy was on the WMU executive committee as missions organization leader. Peggy also teaches Sunday school and Acteens and plays piano -- and is VBS director, Karl added.

"I enjoy getting to know the ladies and being their friend," Peggy said. One new Christian, whom she helped disciple, brought a live duck to their home for dinner on their last day before furlough.

When they return from furlough, Jacob and Christina look forward to getting back into the basketball games they play in the afternoons with their friends. Those games have helped the kids in spreading the gospel.

When they first arrived in Cajamarca, they began playing basketball behind the house and met three boys. Jacob invited them to come to a revival service. Halfway through Karl's sermon, they arrived and sat on the last row. They left after the service but returned to speak with Karl who explained the plan of salvation. All three accepted Christ.

"The group has really reached out to a lot of other people," said Christina. One of the three guys faithfully comes to church, another moved away and the third is president of the youth group.

Karl believes his family has had more quality time in their last year in the mountains than in their four years in Lima. Lack of outside activities and the small community size is a partial reason. But that family atmosphere permeates the very culture in which they live.

Said Karl, "A church gets started on a hilltop and a guy says, 'I've got two cousins on the next hilltop.' That's how we get church starts." In the mountains of northwestern Peru are many such hilltops.

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Texas Hospitality House
a lifesaver for Connie

By Ken Camp

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HUNTSVILLE, Texas (BP)--Connie G. sees the Texas Baptist Hospitality House as more than a place to donate her time on the weekends. She views it the place that saved her life.

A couple of years ago, Connie brought a friend to Huntsville, Texas, to visit someone in prison. While she was there, she learned about another inmate in the Ellis One unit who had not received a visitor since his mother died 12 years before.

"I was introduced to David," she said. "And before long, we fell in love."

But that new relationship could not erase the pain caused by other ones. Connie had been reared in an abusive home where Satanism and other occult practices dated back several generations.

When she rejected her family's belief system, she was subjected to intense persecution and death threats.

"I was down and out to the point of being suicidal," she said.

David recognized Connie was in a more oppressive captivity than his own. Although he was not a committed disciple of Jesus, he had been brought up in a Christian home and he realized Connie needed the kind of help only Christians could offer.

"When David sent me here to the Hospitality House, he wasn't following the Lord yet. We were both running from him at that point. But he had heard about this place from other inmates," Connie said.

The Hospitality House is a temporary shelter for the visiting families of Texas Department of Corrections inmates. Texas Baptists support the ministries of the Hospitality House through their gifts to the Mary Hill Davis Offering for State Missions.

At the Hospitality House, directors Bob and Nelda Norris demonstrated an unconditional love Connie had never experienced. And they introduced her to Jesus as the source of that love.

"I came to the point of either having to accept Jesus or taking my life. I made the choice out of desperation," she said.

Once Connie made her commitment to Jesus Christ and began to grow in her relationship with him, David also turned back to God.

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"David began to really change. It's not our doing. We give full credit to the Lord," Connie said.

The two new Christians were married one year ago in a proxy ceremony, with Connie's son by a previous marriage standing in the place of his new stepfather.

Since then, Connie has been driving each weekend from her home, about 60 miles from Huntsville, not only to visit her husband but also to work in the Hospitality House as a volunteer.

About 32,000 people from 45 states and 32 countries have passed through the doors of the Hospitality House since it opened in 1986.

"When David sent me here, it literally saved my life. When I come every weekend, I see so many lives being changed -- not just the inmates but also the inmates' families," Connie said.

"This is a lifesaving ministry here. I'm gratified that God is allowing me to be part of it."

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Duduit to direct academy,
serve as visiting prof

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LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Michael Duduit, director of development and church relations at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., will become the first full-time executive director of the American Academy of Ministry in Louisville, Ky., effective July 9.

In addition to serving the academy -- an interdenominational professional association and society for ministers -- Duduit will continue as editor of Preaching, a professional journal for ministers. He also will serve as visiting professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, teaching one class per semester during the 1993-94 academic year.

Duduit, a member of the administrative staff at Samford since 1987, is immediate past president of the Baptist Public Relations Association. He is a graduate of Stetson University in Florida and Southern Seminary, earning a Ph.D. in humanities at Florida State University.

As editor of Preaching, Duduit was instrumental in the launching of the American Academy of Ministry in May 1992. The organization has since grown to approximately 1,000 members, representing more than 20 denominational groups.

Duduit also is editor of a recently released preaching text, "Handbook of Contemporary Preaching," which includes essays by 50 widely known pastors and professors of preaching. The book is published by Broadman Press of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

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