

(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 Strobe, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee**

July 15, 1993

93-114

- NASHVILLE -- Southern Baptists' SBCNet announces rate reduction.
- MOSCOW -- Russian ban on missionaries might not affect FMB work.
- KENYA -- Somalia relief work goes on in and out of violent capital.
- ATLANTA -- Volunteers ready to lead state evangelistic efforts for women.
- ALABAMA -- Social work dean issues call for more children's advocates.
- ALABAMA -- Author lists ways for Christians to become advocates for children.
- LOUISIANA -- Pastor's 50-year tenure sparked by a walk through the local A&P.

**Southern Baptists' SBCNet
announces rate reduction**

**Baptist Press
7/15/93**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists' communications network SBCNet will change from an hourly charge to a flat monthly rate, reducing user costs to \$7.95 monthly, beginning Aug. 1.

Previously, persons accessing SBCNet through CompuServe, the SBCNet carrier, were billed \$14.80 for each on-line hour. But with the rapidly increasing number of users, the Baptist Sunday School Board has negotiated the flat monthly charge for unlimited access for SBCNet users, according to David Haywood, coordinator for SBCNet.

SBCNet carries daily releases from Baptist Press, the Southern Baptist Convention's news service, and numerous offerings from the BSSB and other SBC agencies.

Customers must still choose between two different plans with CompuServe, Haywood said. The standard plan, which provides unlimited access to 35 basic services, is \$8.95 monthly. The alternate plan is \$2.50 monthly, plus time on line on CompuServe. This does not include time in SBCNet.

"Customers who only use SBCNet and do not access CompuServe services, the alternate plan is better," said Haywood. Customers who access CompuServe services along with SBCNet will find the standard plan more economical."

With more than 800 church and individual customers signed with SBCNet, Haywood said the increasing popularity of the communications network made decreasing the monthly charge feasible. Growth of the user group has been at 8 percent each month for 1993, he said.

Beyond Baptist Press, information available on SBCNet includes News Room, offering news and feature stories from Southern Baptist agencies and state conventions; Facts and Trends Information Service, news briefs from the Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board with usage suggestions for church newsletters.

Also included is Clip Art, a collection of ready-to-use art pieces; Bold Mission Prayer, requests for prayer from home and foreign missionaries; youth, adult and collegiate Sunday school supplemental teaching helps; youth discipleship training helps; and Minister's Corner, a collection of sermons and illustrations.

--more--

SBCNet may be accessed by using a computer, modem and a membership kit distributed by the Baptist Sunday School Board. Cost of the kit, available in both DOS and Macintosh versions, is \$20. The kit includes CompuServe Information Manager software, account information and a \$15 credit toward usage. Kits may be ordered by calling 1-800-458-2772. Additional information about SBCNet and CompuServe may be obtained by calling Haywood at 1-800-325-7749, ext. 2895.

--30--

Russian ban on missionaries
might not affect FMB work

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
7/15/93

MOSCOW (BP)--A June 14 vote by the Russian Parliament to ban the free flow of foreign missionaries onto Russian soil is seen as a serious threat to religious liberty there, but it might have little effect on Southern Baptist missionaries.

The vote represents the first revision to Russia's historic Freedom of Conscience legislation. That law, enacted in October 1990, marked the end of seven decades of religious repression. It forbade government interference in religious activities.

The revised measure, which needs President Boris Yeltsin's signature to become law, allows foreigners "to carry on activities as individual religious workers" if they are affiliated with a Russian religious organization. But it requires other foreign representatives of religion, or Russian citizens appointed under the authority of a foreign religious organization, to receive a special "accreditation."

The organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Russia received "legal person" status earlier this year, clearing the way for missionaries to buy and sell property, hire people and bring whatever they need into the country. The Russian government recognizes it as a nonprofit religious organization.

Whether that recognition strengthens Southern Baptist missionaries' position in regard to the new law is in question, said attorney Lauren Homer, who filed for their legal status. But even if that status is negated, the missionaries still will be able to call on their affiliation with the Russian Baptist union, although some legal adjustments might have to be made in that relationship, Homer said.

Repeated attempts by Baptist Press to reach Russian Baptist leaders for their reaction to the vote were unsuccessful.

"It doesn't appear to be quite as damaging to us as it might be to others because we are in direct linkage with existing Russian churches," said Don Kammerdiener, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board executive vice president.

However, "any government that threatens the religious liberty of foreigners has already taken upon itself the same authority to threaten the religious liberty of their own citizens," Kammerdiener added.

Missionary Norman Lytle, who administers the work of about 20 other Southern Baptist missionaries in Russia, urged Southern Baptists to pray for religious freedom there, contact U.S. congressional leaders and write the Russian Embassy in Washington to express concern.

"There is considerable concern here about the outcome of this law," Lytle said.

Attorney Homer, founder of the Washington-based religious freedom organization Law and Liberty, wrote Yeltsin and other high government figures explaining how the law violates U.N. human rights standards and even Russia's own existing laws -- including articles 34 and 37 of the Russian constitution. The constitution allows foreigners the same rights and freedoms as Russian citizens, she said.

Homer and other critics of the law see it as a step back toward a state church. The erosion of religious freedom it represents could lead to greater control by Russian Orthodox leaders, they believe. Until the communist era began in 1917, the Russian Orthodox Church exerted often-repressive power as a state church.

--more--

Proposed religious liberty legislation in other parts of Eastern Europe after the fall of communism has aimed to strengthen the hand of majority religions at the expense of evangelicals. For established religions in these areas, control means power and money. But the established churches have played into the hands of nationalists, many left over from communist days, to limit free conscience and the spread of the gospel, Homer said.

The Russian measure is not as clearly linked to Orthodox backlash, however. Even some Russian Baptists are unhappy about the hundreds of Western evangelical groups spending money to spread the gospel on Russian soil without consulting them, Homer said.

Still, the Orthodox church is getting a lot of the blame. A leaflet circulated before Billy Graham's successful Moscow crusade said: "The endless stream of Protestant, Roman Catholic and other missionaries is flung on Russian soil to poison us."

People out to destroy the credibility of evangelicals say the West is trying to "cut people from the Russian church," said a reporter in an article in the Moscow News in May.

"The Orthodox church has found no other way to compete with the Western Protestant Churches in the struggle for souls than to resort to the tried-and-trusted method of state pressure," said Vladimir Oyvin, head of the Christian Information Agency.

But Orthodox priest Gleb Yakunin, a member of Parliament and former religious dissident, attacked the law as "discriminatory, anti-democratic, and breached international agreements on human rights," according to United Press International.

The major Moscow newspaper Izvestia also strongly condemned the measure, saying it was aimed against the very organizations that had long campaigned for the rights of believers persecuted by the Soviet regime. Baptists are among such groups.

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy, however, supported the measure, saying it "met the hopes and needs of the Orthodox clergy ... and opened new perspectives for serving the church in contemporary Russian society." He urged lawmakers last year to "adopt legislative measures preventing the creation in Russia of a network of quite well-to-do religious organizations."

--30--

Somalia relief work goes on
in and out of violent capital

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press
7/15/93

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)--Southern Baptist volunteers continue to minister to the people of Somalia, both inside and outside of the bloody Somali capital of Mogadishu.

Southern Baptists are working with other agencies aiding Somalis in three countries in the Horn of Africa. Two volunteers continue aid programs in Mogadishu itself.

The pair in Mogadishu keep in hourly radio contact with personnel in Nairobi, Kenya, and they report feeling reasonably safe. But they asked for the prayers of Southern Baptists and other Christians.

Feeding and medical clinic programs staffed and funded by Southern Baptists in Mogadishu now operate at about 10 percent of the level they reached before the June 5 attack on United Nations soldiers by forces reportedly loyal to Gen. Mohammed Farrah Aideed.

Most aid groups cut their staffs to the bare minimum after the attack, fearing an increase in violence against foreigners in the capital. The recent murder of four foreign journalists has raised speculation that all aid groups may pull out of the country until the situation stabilizes.

However, aid work with Somalis in other countries and even in areas of Somalia outside Mogadishu has continued without interruption.

--more--

"Mogadishu is not the only ball game in town for folks who feel called to help Somalis," one Southern Baptist aid worker explained. "It's painful not to be able to do all we can in Mogadishu, but there are still plenty of other areas where we can continue to make a difference."

--30--

**Volunteers ready to lead state
evangelistic efforts for women** By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
7/15/93

ATLANTA (BP)--Women in 32 conventions and Canada have formed a network of coordinators to teach Lifestyle Witnessing for Women.

Written by Esther Burroughs of the Home Mission Board's evangelism section, Lifestyle Witnessing for Women is a three- to six-hour seminar to equip women to share Jesus. The material is based on Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman and her witness to the community.

The volunteer state coordinators will teach the material and train others to teach it, Burroughs said. Training can be done at state and associational meetings or in local churches.

Martha Jenkins, state coordinator for Louisiana, is planning a state-wide Lifestyle Witnessing for Women seminar in September 1994. Her focus now is praying for women to serve as leaders.

"We have women who feel so inadequate and unworthy of being used. We have to pray those women into action," Jenkins said.

Evangelism training specifically for women is important because of the differences between men and women, Burroughs said. "Something special happens when women teach women. Women don't respond the same way when men are present."

The seminar on cassette tapes is available from the Home Mission Board customer services, 1-800-634-2462. It will be produced on video next year, Burroughs said.

To contact a state coordinator for information about leading a seminar, contact the state convention evangelism director or Gerry Pepitone, assistant to Burroughs, at (404) 432-2902.

State coordinators include:

Alabama, Susan Forehand; Alaska, Cecilia Sullins; Arizona, Patty Wilder; Arkansas, Brenda Woodard; California, Kay Akins; Canada, Catherine Schmidt; Colorado, Barbara Griffis; Dakota Fellowship and Montana Fellowship, Imogene Bryant; Georgia, Dot Darden; Hawaii, Hatsue Kinoshita; Illinois, Debbie Lee, Beverly Ozee.

Indiana, Kathryn Robinson, Debbi Wheeler; Kansas-Nebraska, Sharon Moody; Kentucky, Mary Lou Crutcher; Louisiana, Martha Jenkins; Michigan, Phyllis Harbaugh; Minnesota-Wisconsin, Ellen Abernathy; Mississippi, June McKee; Missouri, Cynthia Leach; New England, Laura Lea Chamblee; New Mexico, Sue Lawson.

North Carolina, Beverly Chilton; Northwest, Nancy Hall; Ohio, Cindy Landry; Pennsylvania-South Jersey, Kay Baldwin; South Carolina, Kathy Jackson; Tennessee, Tommye Shackelford, Creely Wilson; Texas, Deborah Johnson.

Utah-Idaho, Vivian Chaney; Virginia, Earlene Jessee; Washington D.C., Ruby Shepherd; West Virginia, Paula Wood.

--30--

**Social work dean issues call
for more children's advocates** By Susan Doyle

Baptist Press
7/15/93

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Wally and "The Beav" used to represent the typical American youth and child.

The boys always had meals -- balanced and beautiful -- with their entire family. There never seemed to be any worry concerning a house to live in or a good school to attend.

--more--

But today, life for most American children is a far cry from those "Leave It to Beaver" days. Television now reflects a different societal norm -- one that typically includes disrespect toward family members (consider "Roseanne"), non-traditional family make-up (consider "Full House") and so on.

Compared to life in these newer TV programs, life for Wally and the Beaver was simple.

In fact, life for most children and youth today has to be described in words like "challenging" and "difficult," according to an expert on children.

Those challenges and difficulties are the consequences of choices society has made and values it has embraced, says Diana Garland, dean of the Carver School of Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Garland describes the impact of society's choices on today's children in a new book, "Precious in His Sight, A Guide to Child Advocacy," published by New Hope Press. New Hope is a publishing arm of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Some of the most critical problems, according to Garland, are:

-- Children are considered innocent and dependent, yet are put in situations that require them to act like adults long before they are ready.

Children receive mixed signals about what they are old enough to do and not old enough to do, Garland says.

Many school-age children are left unsupervised at home for hours while parents work, she says. While neither parents nor children may be happy with this type of arrangement, it is increasingly becoming a fact of life within the American society.

"Some Christian leaders have stated emphatically that mothers should stay home 'where they belong' and then there would not be a child-care problem," she notes. "But arguing that parents ought to stay home and provide care for their own children does not address the plight of many families who, for many reasons, need child care."

-- Some children suffer from having it all; other children suffer by living in poverty.

"Children are the poorest population group in our country and they are getting poorer," Garland says. "A total of 12.6 million American children now live in poverty, an increase of more than 2.5 million in only 10 years. One out of five children lives in a family which lives below the poverty level. Their parents must choose between feeding their children, paying the rent or utility bills or taking their children to the doctor."

The poverty level as defined by the federal government changes each year according to changes in the Consumer Price Index. Even though the purchasing power remains constant, it is low, according to Garland.

In 1992, a family of two was defined as "poor" if they had an annual income of less than \$9,190; a family of three, less than \$11,570; a family of four, \$13,950.

"An income equal to or above the government-defined poverty level does not guarantee that a family can meet its essential needs," Garland says. The definition does not take into account high housing and utility costs, health-care costs or child-care costs.

Not only are many children considered poor, 41 percent of all poor children are considered "desperately poor," living in families whose incomes are less than half the poverty line, she says.

Garland cites four reasons why there are so many children living in poverty in the richest nation in the world:

-- Mothers are trying to support their children on their own.

-- Parents cannot find work.

-- Government programs designed to help poor families obtain jobs often miss their mark because of inadequate funding or short-sighted goals.

-- Income support to families with children through the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program still leaves families far below the poverty level.

"In a nation as wealthy as ours, all children should have adequate food, necessary clothing, a safe home, needed medical care and the security that parents will be able to meet these basic needs tomorrow and into the future," Garland says.

-- Almost 29 percent of American young people who entered the ninth grade in 1984 failed to graduate from high school four years later. Even those who remain in school may fail to be educated.

"Young people who stay in school may graduate unable to follow an instruction form, fill out a job application, read a newspaper or develop and follow a budget," Garland says. "Those with weak reading and math skills are four times more likely to become dependent on welfare as adults than those with strong skills. They are eight times more likely to become single parents."

Seeds of success or failure are sown early in the child's life -- especially the poor child's life, according to Garland.

Disadvantaged children often are not ready to begin school, she says. "By the third grade, some children have fallen far behind, and those behind in reading will tend to fall further and further behind. They not only have difficulty in reading but they have difficulty in all the other subjects that depend on reading."

Children form opinions of themselves early, she says. Children who have low self-esteem often do not try as hard or as long. They expect to fail and they stop trying.

-- One out of every four babies in the United States is born to a single mother.

"Each year, 1 million American teen-age girls become pregnant; on an average, one out of three girls is pregnant before she reaches age 20," Garland says.

The average age at which all girls become sexually active is now 16, she notes.

"Teen-age mothers are most likely to be poor not only as teen-agers but for the rest of their lives," she says. "They earn an average of half the lifetime income of women who wait until age 20 or longer to have their first baby."

Garland cites factors which put teens at risk for a pregnancy outside marriage including ignorance, peer group pressure, poor self-esteem, influence from the media, use of alcohol and drugs, lack of responsibility for their behavior and troubled family relationships.

But the situation facing children of today isn't without hope.

"A comprehensive response is needed," Garland stresses. "Churches can respond directly to the needs of adolescents. Churches can empower parents to tackle the forces in the lives of their children which place them at risk. Christians can advocate for changes in communities and schools."

Advocates who can plead the case of others are needed for children who can't do it for themselves, she says. In her book, Garland outlines exactly why Christians should and can become effective advocates.

"Apart from certain criminals who have committed felonies, children are the most disenfranchised group in our society. They have neither money of their own nor the right to vote," Garland says.

"Children need others to be voices in their behalf, to present their needs and to persist until those needs are met."

--30--

Author lists ways for Christians
to become advocates for children

Baptist Press
7/15/93

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--In her newly released book, "Precious in His Sight, A Guide to Child Advocacy," Diana Garland, dean of the Carver School of Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, lists specific ways Christians can become advocates for children:

- Relate to and care for children.
- Learn how children see and understand the world.
- Welcome children into the church as valuable members.
- Include children in the worship, ministry and administration aspects of the church.
- Organize a network of family child-care providers.

--more--

- Encourage state and federal legislation for child care for preschoolers and school-age children and monitor child-care programs in your community.
- Visit social service agencies and poor neighborhoods.
- Participate in community ministries.
- Volunteer to work in a shelter for homeless families or other programs which serve the poor in your community.
- Provide tutoring and educational support for disadvantaged children.
- Reach out to teen parents.
- Become a special adult in the life of a child who needs an adult friend.
- Propose solutions to the problems being addressed.
- Propose solutions which empower children and families to make decisions about their own lives.
- Develop partnerships with concerned citizens inside government agencies.
- Use more than one approach.
- Know what is happening and be a part of it.
- Write letters and make phone calls.
- Speak to decision-makers.
- Involve others.
- Keep at it.

--30--

Pastor's 50-year tenure sparked
by a walk through the local A&P By Raymond L. Daye

Baptist Press
7/15/93

METAIRIE, La. (BP)--He jokes about his age, laughs about his professional longevity and is quick to find humor in even the most troubling circumstances.

But J. Paul Driscoll is serious about the job he's done for 50 years -- winning the lost to Jesus in the New Orleans/Metairie area through Crescent City Baptist Church, a congregation he started during the middle of World War II.

Driscoll, by his count, has led about 25,000 people to Christ, many in what has become his characteristic manner of one-on-one evangelism on the streets of the Crescent City and its suburbs. He has baptized almost 10,000 of those, many of whom are active leaders in various churches in the area.

Driscoll would not say just how old he is. It doesn't really matter because he has no intention of retiring anytime soon.

"I'll say that I'm a little younger than Reagan and a little older than Bush," he said with a chuckle. "But I told my congregation the other day that when I turn 100 I'm walking away and they better not try to stop me."

He said he "religiously" walks three miles a day and does calisthenics to stay in shape. He had heart bypass surgery 12 years ago but said he is now in good health.

Driscoll said he was called to the gospel ministry when he was about 25. His pastor recommended he attend seminary, so he visited the ones in New Orleans and Fort Worth. He chose New Orleans, not because he felt it was better or in his home state but because of the impression he got in the A&P Supermarket.

"I walked into the A&P, which was the only one of its kind in the country at that time, and I was struck by the number of people in that building," Driscoll said. "There were more people shopping than lived in my hometown of Mansfield. I was intrigued by that. I said, 'There are so many unchurched people here. This is where I belong.'"

He enrolled in seminary, found a vacant store in what is called the Mid-City section of New Orleans and named his new church, Mid-City Baptist Church. A financial crisis in 1974 forced the church to relocate to Metairie, and it was renamed Crescent City Baptist Church.

Driscoll remembers the first person he won to the Lord in New Orleans.

--more--

"I was late for s minary classes, as I usually was, and was rushing to go seven miles in seven minutes," Driscoll said. "The professor had already warned me about coming into class late and I knew I was going to catch it. I back d out of the driveway and had only gone a few yards when I heard 'clunky, clunky, clunky.' I had a flat tire. I pulled into a service station across the street and the attendant told me to just pull it over and park it. They were very busy and they would get to it when they could."

Driscoll said three men were standing by the station, talking loudly and using God's name in vain.

"I was already irritated because of the flat tire and that just irritat d me more," he said. "I walked up to them and handed them a tract about four things God wants you to know."

Driscoll said he talked to them about the penalty for taking God's name in vain, and two of them -- a professed Baptist and an Episcopalian -- made excuses to leave as quickly as they could, leaving Pat Murphy, a Catholic, alone with the young preacher.

The two men talked about the World War and Driscoll talked about the final war predicted in the Bible. Driscoll witnessed to Murphy for almost two hours in the parking lot of the service station and Murphy committed his life to Christ that day. Murphy led his wife to the Lord that night and they joined Mid-City Baptist that Sunday and were baptized.

Ministering in the New Orleans area has had its advantages and disadvantages. Driscoll said he would like to have seen more converts follow the Lord in believer's baptism and join a Baptist church but "this area is heavily influenced by the Catholic religion and there is a lot of pressure on people not to be baptized and leave the Catholic Church."

But Driscoll doesn't let that worry him because "my No. 1 priority is to help people know the Lord. It's not the water or the church membership that saves them."

There have been many highlights in his 50-year ministry at the church, he said. The church led the Southern Baptist Convention in baptisms in at least one year in the 1960s.

Another high point was a two-month world tour the church gave him and his wife, Helen, "because we had not taken a vacation in 15 years," he said. He said he felt strong urges to remain in Hawaii, Japan, Hong Kong and other stops along the way because of the potential for evangelism in those areas.

Instead, he returned to New Orleans and considered that his mission field.

In the past 50 years, the church has sponsored two missions that have grown into strong churches in their own right: Ponchartrain Baptist Church in New Orleans and Williams Boulevard Baptist Church in Kenner.

Another successful mission effort, of sorts, is the church-sponsored private school, Crescent City High School. The school was started in 1956 and has attained a reputation for academic and athletic excellence.

"The school is a ministry of the church," Driscoll said. "You don't make any money from a school; it is a missionary endeavor. It takes money to have a school."

The enrollment is now 550. A majority are Baptist but "Catholics are a close second." It is an integrated school with white, blacks and Oriental students. All of the school's athletic teams made it to the state playoffs this past year, he added.

One of the graduation requirements is to pass a course in the Bible, taught by his wife. Mrs. Driscoll was valedictorian of her class at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and has taught at the seminary.

While his success as a soul-winner, church-grower and pastor are ample grounds for acclaim, Driscoll's half-century of service in one church is certainly a rarity in Baptist circles.

"When I was growing up in north Louisiana, we changed pastors about every two years," Driscoll said with a smile crossing his face. "If he stayed three years, he was really doing good. The first year is the honeymoon, and nobody wants to say anything bad about 'the new preacher.' During the second year, they start choosing sides. 'I'm against the preacher,' 'I'm for the preach r.'"

Driscoll said has been fortunate at Mid-City and Crescent City in that "most of the members were saved and baptized in this church. They did not transfer their membership from another church. Also, most of them come from a Catholic background and the Catholics just aren't trained in how to get rid of a preacher."

The church has been housed in several buildings in the past half-century, and they all have one architectural design in common: no center aisle.

"The brides hate my churches because they like to walk down the aisle and be seen by everyone," Driscoll said. "We resolved that problem by having them come down one aisle and then have the recessional up the other. That way everyone sees the bride."

Center aisles "are also conducive to church splits. I noticed as a child that the 'Smiths' would sit on one side of the church and the 'Joneses' would sit on the other. I would count heads and tell my friends, 'If they vote on the preacher today, he ain't going to make it.'"

In past building programs, someone usually grouses, "I guess we won't have a center aisle in this one either," Driscoll said with a smile.

On a more serious note, Driscoll added, "Even though we as Baptists fuss and fight among ourselves, the most refreshing thing in a church is when someone gets saved. You just lay down the hatchet and pick up the Bible."

Another reason for his anti-aisle philosophy is that he hates to see the prime central location in the church wasted by empty space.

"I always try to maintain eye contact with the congregation," he said. "I look to the left and I look to the right as a preach. I pass the center twice. I tell people if they are bringing someone lost to church, make sure they sit in the center."

While the gospel message has not changed over the years, people's response and willingness to respond to it have.

"It used to be a lot easier to win souls to the Lord in New Orleans because there were so few trying to win souls," Driscoll said. "It's harder now for two reasons. The good side is, there are a lot of others doing it. The bad side is, we are living in such an immoral atmosphere here that it is harder to get people to listen."

"It is harder to do door-to-door visitation because of the atmosphere of violence and immorality that make people more cautious in who they let into their homes," he said. "Society has degenerated to a point that they don't listen as readily as they used to."

Driscoll said Crescent City Baptist has "a good cross-section of this area" in its congregation every Sunday. Doctors, lawyers and professors sit next to blue collar laborers, municipal employees, custodians and the homeless.

"When the street people come in, I don't put them up in the balcony or hide them away on a back row," Driscoll said. "I put them right up front near me. It reminds me how blessed we are, that for the grace of God that could be me sitting in that front row. Also, their ears are filled daily with so many things on the streets that I want them to be sure to be filled with the gospel on Sunday."

HOUSE MAIL



BAPTIST PRESS

901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

HOUSE MAIL

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